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# American Lutheranism

## VOLUME II



### The United Lutheran Church

(General Synod, General Council,  
United Synod in the South)

By

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ST. LOUIS, MO.  
CONCORDIA PUBLISHING HOUSE  
1919



## PREFACE.

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AMERICAN LUTHERANISM will appear in four volumes, this present second volume to be followed by the first, dealing with the early history of Lutheranism in America.

The third volume will present the history of the Ohio, Iowa, Buffalo, and the Scandinavian synods.

The fourth volume will contain the history and doctrinal position of the Missouri, Wisconsin, and other synods connected with the Synodical Conference.

As appears from this second volume, our chief object is to record the facts as to the theological attitude of the various Lutheran bodies in America, with such comment only as we deemed necessary.

As to the quotations from the *Lutheran Observer* and other English periodicals, we frequently had to content ourselves with retranslations from the German in *Lehre und Wehre, Lutheraner*, etc.

Brackets found in passages cited contain additions, comments, corrections, etc., of our own, not of the respective periodicals quoted.

If errors, no matter of whatever nature they may be, should have crept in anywhere, we here express our gratitude for corrections made.

Further prefatory and introductory remarks will accompany Vol. I, which, *Deo volente*, will go to the printers forthwith.

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Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, Mo.

May 28, 1919.



## TABLE OF CONTENTS.

	PAGE
<b>THE UNITED LUTHERAN CHURCH</b> . . . . .	1—11
Merger . . . . .	1
Constitution . . . . .	5
Character . . . . .	9
<b>THE GENERAL SYNOD</b> . . . . .	12—175
Organization . . . . .	12
Character . . . . .	19
Constitution . . . . .	22
Evaluation . . . . .	25
Doctrinal Basis . . . . .	32
Basis Interpreted . . . . .	40
Unionism . . . . .	48
Union Letter of 1845 . . . . .	58
Christian Union . . . . .	63
Theology Reformed . . . . .	68
Revivalism . . . . .	76
"American Lutheranism" . . . . .	89
Definite Platform Controversy . . . . .	101
Position of District Synods toward Platform . . . . .	111
General Synod's Attitude toward Platform . . . . .	117
York Convention . . . . .	123
Secessions and Separations . . . . .	130
Influential Theologians . . . . .	136
Missouri's Influence . . . . .	153
Explanatory Statements of Doctrinal Basis . . . . .	158
Restatement of Basis . . . . .	161
Actual Conditions . . . . .	166
Un-Lutheran Practise . . . . .	170

## VIII

## TABLE OF CONTENTS.

	PAGE
THE GENERAL COUNCIL . . . . .	176—227
Synods Composing the Council . . . . .	176
Charles Porterfield Krauth . . . . .	181
Other Representative Theologians . . . . .	187
Constitution . . . . .	190
Subtle Unionism . . . . .	195
The Four Points . . . . .	198
Akron-Galesburg Rule . . . . .	202
Interdenominational Fellowship . . . . .	204
Attitude toward Lodges . . . . .	207
Chiliasm . . . . .	210
Other Aberiations . . . . .	212
Romanism . . . . .	211
Synergism . . . . .	217
Liberalistic Trends . . . . .	220
Equivocal Doctrinal Attitude . . . . .	224
THE UNITED SYNOD SOUTH . . . . .	228—243
Organization . . . . .	228
Doctrinal Basis . . . . .	229
Indifferentism . . . . .	232
Un-Lutheran Practise . . . . .	234
Tennessee and Holston Synods . . . . .	236
Common Service . . . . .	241

## **The United Lutheran Church.**

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### **MERGER.**

1. **Origin of the New Body.** — On April 18, 1917, at Philadelphia, the Joint Quadricentennial Committee, appointed by the General Synod, the General Council, and the United Synod in the South to arrange for a union celebration of the Reformation, decided that the merging of the three affiliated general bodies would be "the fittest commemoration and noblest memorial of the four-hundredth Reformation Jubilee." Accordingly, the presidents of these bodies, being present, were requested to form a joint committee, which should prepare a constitution for a united Church and present the same to the three general bodies for their consideration, and, if approved, for submission to the District Synods. The constitution, framed by the committee, was in the same year adopted by all of the three general bodies, the General Synod, which, in 1820, had been founded for the express purpose of uniting all Lutheran synods in America, being the first to assent to the Merger during its session at Chicago, June 20 to 27, 1917. The various District Synods also having approved of the union and having ratified the constitution, the Merger was consummated at New York City, November 15, 1918. Dr. F. H. Knubel, a member of the General Synod, was elected President of the new body — "The United Lutheran Church in America." Of the total number of Lutherans in America (63 synods, 15,243 congregations, 9,790 pastors, 2,450,000 confirmed and 3,780,000 baptized members) the United Church embraces 45 synods, 10 theological seminaries with 46 professors and 267 students, 17 colleges, 6 academies, 3,747 congregations and mission-posts, 2,754 pastors, almost 1,000,000 baptized members, and 758,000 confirmed members, the General Synod contributing 364,000, the General Council 340,000, and the United Synod in the

South 53,000. The United Church is the second largest Lutheran body in America, the Synodical Conference outnumbering it by only about 50,000 confirmed members. The merged bodies will continue to exist legally until no property rights are imperiled. In 1919 it was decided to consolidate the *Lutheran*, the *Lutheran Church Work and Observer*, and the *Lutheran Church Visitor*. The new church-paper will be *The Lutheran*, with Dr. G. W. Sandt as editor-in-chief.

**2. Refusing to Enter the Merger.** — The United Lutheran Church, according to the *Lutheran*, "has inaugurated a new era of progress for our beloved Lutheran Church. . . . Three names have gone down, but a new and greater name has arisen from their ashes." This, however, was not the view of the Iowa and Augustana synods, though both indirectly, through their connection with the General Council, had for years been in church-fellowship also with the General Synod, hence, consistently might have entertained scruples to join the Merger no more than the Council. When, at Philadelphia, October 25, 1917, the General Council passed on the Merger, Dr. M. Reu, the representative of the Iowa Synod, was the only delegate (advisory) who voted against it. Pointing especially to the fact that the General Synod, at its last convention in Chicago, had elected as president a man [Dr. Geo. Tressler] who was publicly known to be a Mason of a high degree, Dr. Reu warned against the union, as it would practically mean the abandonment of the Council's position on pulpit- and altar-fellowship, as well as on the lodge-question. The *Kirchenblatt* of the Iowa Synod: "It is apparent that the influence of the General Synod on the General Council has paralyzed the practical principles of the fathers, and that the contemplated Merger is tantamount to an annulment of these principles, as far as the official practise of this new church-body will come into question. And yet, just this life, the ecclesiastical life and practise of the ministers and congregations, is the mirror in which the real confessional attitude may be seen. We [Iowa] owe much to the General Council, and will always remember this gratefully, but now our roads separate and we must part. American [?] Lutheranism [?], which the General Synod has always stood for, and which has had its adherents also in the

General Council, especially among its nativistic representatives, will control also the new church-body. This, according to our understanding, means that a far-reaching influence of a Reformed nature will manifest itself, especially with respect to church-practise and the attitude toward all manner of societies and antichristian lodges." (*Lehre und Wehre*, 1917, 521. 572.)

3. Withdrawal of the Augustana Synod. — For more than a decade prior to the Merger the current within the Swedish Augustana Synod had been running against the General Council. Accordingly, to the Augustana Synod the contemplated union was an occasion rather than a cause for refusing to join the movement and for severing her connections also with the Council. Indeed, at the convention of the General Council at Philadelphia, October 25, 1917, all of the Augustana representatives had cast their votes for the new organization. At her last convention, June 8, 1918, however, the Synod, in spite of the most strenuous efforts on the part of the delegates of the General Council to draw her into the union, passed the resolution: "*Resolved*, That the Augustana Synod does not at this time see its way clear to enter the proposed merger of the United Lutheran Church in America, but declares itself in favor of a federation of Lutheran church-bodies in North America." A subsequent resolution severed her connection with the Council. The reasons advanced by the Augustana Synod for her action were not of a doctrinal or confessional nature, but rather pertained to the interest of her peculiar work among the Swedish population of our country. Yet the course chosen by the Augustana Synod was, at least in part, the result also of the secret fear that the new body would rapidly sink to the level of the doctrinal and practical laxism of the General Synod. Warning against the Merger, the *Lutheran Companion*, of the Augustana Synod, wrote: "We must hold ourselves aloof from spiritual fellowship with such churches or denominations, some of whose factors advocate and defend lodgism, dancing as a pastime for the young people under the auspices and sanction of the church, etc." (*L. u. W.*, 1917, 522.) Disappointed on account of the withdrawal of the Augustana Synod, the *Lutheran*, of the General Council,

commented: "The Augustana Synod has subordinated unity of faith to unity of race. This is as un-American as it is un-Lutheran, and the day of its real Lutheran union is thereby indefinitely postponed. . . . We are persuaded that this separation was willed by man and not by God, though we also believe that He will, in the end, overrule it for good . . . The Augustana Synod has missed its opportunity; it has limited the sphere of its influence; it has placed synodical and social interests as a clog in the wheel of the Lutheran Church's progress as a whole, and set the Church back a generation or more to start afresh on the pathway to its ultimate goal. . . . Lutherans are now to be fenced off into social groups to be known as the Swedish, the Norwegian, the German, and the English divisions of the Lutheran forces in this country." (*L. u. W.*, 1917, 522; 1918, 329 ff.)

4. **Attitude of the Ohio Synod.** — Though representatives also of the Ohio Synod served on the Joint Quadricentennial Committee in order to arrange for a union celebration of the Reformation together with the representatives of the General Synod, the Council and the United Synod South, the official organs of the Ohio Synod were severe in condemning the Merger. The *Lutheran Standard*, August 4, 1917: "There are chiefly two practical differences that keep us apart, namely, that concerning altar- and pulpit-fellowship and that concerning the lodge. Concerning the first point the constitution [of the Merger] has nothing to say whatever. Relative to lodge-membership, the general body will have only advisory power." The *Kirchenzeitung*, of the Ohio Synod, May 12, 1917: "The great and glorious work of Dr. Krauth in the Council has been nullified. The General Synod's practise of fraternizing with the sects will prevail. What is sound and good in the Council will crumble; the proposed union is a great victory for the lax portion of the General Synod and a pitiable defeat for the Council. Indeed, we shall be told about the 'salt' that the Council may be in the new body, but that is an old, old game, which cannot fool people any more. And this to celebrate the Reformation Jubilee! Would that Luther could return and with the thunder of his scorn shatter this celebration of his work! Where unionism has its jubilee, all true Lutherans

turn away in sorrow and anger." (*Luth. Witness*, 1918, 406.) However, considering that pulpit- and altar-fellowship, wherever justified, clears the way for all other external unions, and that Ohio representatives served on the Quadricentennial Committee for a union celebration of the Reformation, the above criticism, warranted though it be, will hardly be viewed as consistent

### CONSTITUTION.

**5. Doctrinal Basis.**—The Constitution of the United Lutheran Church provides: "Article II: Doctrinal Basis. Section 1. The United Lutheran Church in America receives and holds the canonical Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments as the inspired Word of God and as the only infallible rule and standard of faith and practise, according to which all doctrines and teachers are to be judged.—Section 2. The United Lutheran Church in America accepts the three ecumenical creeds; namely, the Apostles', the Nicene, and the Athanasian, as important testimonies drawn from the Holy Scriptures, and rejects all errors which they condemn.—Section 3. The United Lutheran Church in America receives and holds the Unaltered Augsburg Confession as a correct exhibition of the faith and doctrine of the Evangelical Lutheran Church, founded upon the Word of God; and acknowledges all churches that sincerely hold and faithfully confess the doctrines of the Unaltered Augsburg Confession to be entitled to the name of Evangelical Lutheran.—Section 4. The United Lutheran Church in America recognizes the Apology of the Augsburg Confession, the Smalcald Articles, the Large and Small Catechisms of Luther, and the Formula of Concord as in the harmony of one and the same pure Scriptural faith."—"Article IV. Section 2. Any Evangelical Lutheran synod applying for admission which has accepted the Constitution with its Doctrinal Basis, as set forth in Article II, and whose constitution has been approved by the Executive Board, may be received into membership by a majority vote at any regular convention."

**6. Further Confessional Statements.**—Among the other sections of the Constitution expressing directly or indirectly the confessional and doctrinal attitude of the new body are the

following: "Article VI: Objects. The objects of the United Lutheran Church in America are . . . Section 1 To preserve and extend the pure teaching of the Gospel and the right administration of the Sacraments. (Eph 4, 5 6; the Augsburg Confession, Art. VII ) Section 2. To conserve the unity of the true faith (Eph. 4, 3—16; 1 Cor. 1, 10), to guard against any departure therefrom (Rom 16, 17), and to strengthen the Church in faith and confession. Section 3. To express outwardly the spiritual unity of the Lutheran congregations and synods, to cultivate cooperation among all Lutherans in the promotion of the general interests of the Church, to seek the unification of all Lutherans in one orthodox faith, and thus to develop and unfold the specific Lutheran principle and practise, and make their strength effective."—"Article VIII: Powers . . . Section 6: As to the Maintenance of Principle and Practise. The United Lutheran Church in America shall protect and enforce its Doctrinal Basis, secure pure preaching of the Word of God and the right administration of the Sacraments in all its synods and congregations. It shall also have the right, where it deems that loyalty to the Word of God requires it, to advise and admonish concerning association and affiliation with non-ecclesiastical and other organizations whose principles or practises appear to be inconsistent with full loyalty to the Christian Church" [weak and misleading, if Freemasons and similar lodges are meant; the more so, as quite a number of the clergymen in the Merger are lodgemen]; "but the synods alone shall have the power of discipline" [conflicts with principle of unity in doctrine and practise].-- "Article III. Section 7. In the formation and administration of a general body the synods may know and deal with each other only as synods. In all such cases the official record is to be accepted as evidence of the doctrinal position of each synod, and of the principles for which alone the other synods are responsible by connection with it." This section, according to which the new body assumes responsibility only for the official doctrine and practise of the District Synods as such, but declines to answer for what the congregations, pastors, and laymen may teach and practise, unduly limits the responsibility for false doctrine and practise, conflicts with the Scrip-

tural rule of Christian fellowship, and stamps the United Church as unionistic — “Article VIII: Powers. Section 5: As to Doctrine and Conscience All matters of doctrine and conscience shall be decided according to the Word of God alone” [What of sections 2, 3, and 4 of Article II on Doctrinal Basis?] “If, on grounds of doctrine or conscience, the question be raised as to the binding character of any action, the said question shall be referred to the Commission of Adjudication. Under no circumstances shall the right of a minority be disregarded, or the right to record an individual protest on the ground of conscience be refused.” — “Article XII: Commission of Adjudication Section 1. A Commission of Adjudication shall be established, to which shall be referred, for interpretation and decision, all disputed questions of doctrine and practise, and this commission shall constitute a court for decision of all questions of principle or action arising within the United Lutheran Church in America, and which had been properly referred to it by resolution or by appeal of any of the synods. . . . Section 4 The consent of at least six members shall always be necessary for a decision” According to this article, unanimity in questions of doctrine and practise is not required — a violation, once more, of the principle of Christian unity!

**7. A Legislative Body.** — Among the doubtful paragraphs of the Constitution are also the following: “Article III. . . . Section 6. Congregations representatively constituting the various synods may elect delegates through their synods to represent them in a general body, all decisions of which, when made in accordance with the Constitution, *bind*, so far as the terms of mutual agreement make them binding, those congregations and synods which consent to be represented in the general body.” — “Article VIII: Powers. Section 4. If synods have had due and legal opportunity to be represented in the conventions of the United Lutheran Church in America, they are *bound* by all resolutions that have been passed in accordance with this Constitution; but each synod retains every power, right, and jurisdiction in its own internal affairs not expressly delegated to the United Lutheran Church in America.” — “Section 7: As to Books of Devotion and Instruction, etc.

The United Lutheran Church in America shall provide books of devotion and instruction, such as liturgies, hymn-books, and catechisms, and no synod *without its sanction* shall publish or recommend books of this kind other than those provided by the general body."—"Article XIV: Synods. Section 1. No synod in connection with the United Lutheran Church in America shall alter its geographical boundaries *without the permission* of the general body." According to the sections quoted, the United Lutheran Church is not a mere advisory, but a legislative body.

8. Relations with Non-Lutherans. — According to the *Lutheran Church Work and Observer* the question of cooperation with other than Lutheran bodies is left open by the constitution of the United Lutheran Church. Construed in its historical context, this means that the United Church tolerates, and does not disapprove of, fraternal intercourse with the sects. The Constitution provides: "Article VI: Objects. The objects of the United Lutheran Church in America are. . . . Section 7: To enter into relations with other bodies in the unity of the faith, and to exchange official delegates with them."—"Article VIII: Powers. Section 1: As to External Relations. The United Lutheran Church in America shall have power to form and dissolve relations with other general bodies, organizations, and movements. To secure uniform and consistent practise, no synod, conference, or board, or any official representative thereof, shall have power to independent affiliation with general organizations and movements." Does this and the preceding section refer also to non-Lutheran movements, organizations, and bodies, such as the Federal Council, of which the General Synod was a member? In the *Lutheran Church Work and Observer*, January 3, 1918, Dr. A. Pohlman suggested that the "Merger idea be enlarged so as to include all Protestant denominations, in order to get better known in America, increase our prestige and influence, and take a more decided interest in the affairs of the world." "We can well afford," says he, "to rub out some of those things which are conceded to be secondary." More contact with the other denominations would obliterate much of the "foreign" from our Lutheranism, and make us an "American Lutheran Church."

## CHARACTER.

9. **Actual Position of the New Union.**—The Merger did not come as a surprise, for the uniting bodies, being of a common origin, had for a long period occupied essentially the same position as to doctrine and practise, exchanged delegates, and cooperated in various ways. Nor was it accompanied by any essential change in the doctrinal or practical attitude of any of the synods and congregations now constituting the new body. Yet it will be admitted that, by merging, the General Synod, constitutionally, made a confessional stride forward, while, as to their official attitude toward Lutheran practise, the United Synod in the South, and especially the General Council, took a step backward. For the level and measure of the new Union will naturally be that of the most liberal of the united bodies, *viz.*, the actual present, practical as well as doctrinal, position of the synods which constitute the General Synod. According to the Preamble of the Constitution the object of the Merger was “to make the inner unity, which we” [the official bodies as such] “have with one another manifest in common confession, defense, and maintenance of our faith, and in united efforts for the extension of the Kingdom of God at home and abroad.” However, the new Union was not the result of any discussions of, and subsequent agreements and settlements in, any doctrinal or practical differences. The “inner unity” of the merging bodies themselves, especially of the General Synod, never was a real agreement in the truth, but rather an agreement to disagree with respect to Lutheran doctrines and practise. The United Church was not born of real inner Lutheran unity of the spirit, but of the desire of external union, in spite of the lack of real doctrinal agreement. The Merger is in more than one way a concession to the original unionistic spirit of the General Synod. Especially the absence, in the Constitution, of a paragraph directed against pulpit- and altar-fellowship with non-Lutherans, and of a definite and satisfactory statement pertaining to antichristian societies, cannot but be viewed as an *ex professo* lowering of the Lutheran standard to the laxism always prevailing in the General Synod. The real doctrinal and confessional position of the United Lutheran Church, apart from the merits

and demerits of its Constitution, is, in the last analysis, not so much determined by its official declarations as by the actual conditions prevailing in its synods and congregations. The real standpoint of a Church is not the one written and subscribed to on paper, but which manifests itself in her actual teaching, life, and practise. Judged, then, by what the merging bodies actually were immediately prior to their union, the real United Lutheran Church in America is not nearly on a par with what its doctrinal basis would seem to warrant. G. A. Tressler, the former president of the General Synod, said in the *Lutheran*, November 7, 1918: "My hope and wish is that, as far as the United Lutheran Church is concerned, it may merge our best and submerge the rest." What of this "best"? And what is "the rest"? The history of the three merging bodies will tell.

10. National Lutheran Council. — According to Article VI, Section 3 of the Constitution, it is the object of the United Lutheran Church "to cultivate cooperation among all Lutherans in the promotion of the general interests of the Church; to seek the unification of all Lutherans in one orthodox faith." The ultimate goal of the United Lutheran Church self-evidently is the organic union of all Lutheran synods and congregations of this country as "The Lutheran Church in America," or, at least, "The Federated Lutheran Church in America." "The National Lutheran Council," organized September 6, 1918, in Chicago, is, no doubt, viewed by many as a stepping-stone to, and a means for the attainment of, this end. The United Lutheran Church, says the *Philadelphia Seminary Bulletin*, "is but part of a larger movement in the direction of Lutheran unity and activity for which we thank God and take courage. Illustrations of this are: The National Lutheran Commission for Soldiers' and Sailors' Welfare, The National Lutheran Council, and the proposed Central Lutheran control of all American Lutheran Foreign Missions." (1919, 2, p. 4) The objects of the National Lutheran Council are: statistical information; publicity in all matters that require common utterance by the Lutheran Church; representation of our Church in its relation to entities outside of itself; dealing with the problems arising out of war and other emergencies; the solution of problems arising

from social, economic, intellectual, or other conditions, or changes affecting religious life and consciousness; the fostering of true Christian loyalty and the maintenance of a righteous relation between Church and State as separate entities with correlated, yet distinctly defined functions; provision through the National Lutheran Commission for the spiritual welfare of the people who are living and working in the 24 "War Production Communities," part of which work is to be done in cooperation with other denominations; to serve in solving the problems of the Lutheran Church in European countries where the war has upset political, social, and religious conditions; to adjust matters on the Home Mission field, in order to restrict and stop destructive competitive church-work; to discourage, ignore, and abandon public polemics among Lutherans; to prepare a statement defining the essentials of a catholic spirit as viewed by the Lutheran Church. With the exception of the Synodical Conference (always wary of entangling and unionistic alliances), practically all of the Lutheran synods in America are connected with the National Lutheran Council. (*L. u. W.*, 1919, 86 ff.) A meeting of the presidents and representatives of various Lutheran bodies, called by the National Lutheran Council and held in Chicago, March 11 to 13, 1919, adopted a number of statements on reconciliation, absolution, the means of grace, justification, faith, conversion and election. However, these declarations, though, as far as they go, apparently not in dissonance with the Lutheran confessions, cover neither all the doctrines controverted in our Church, nor all of the disputed points involved in the doctrines dealt with at Chicago. With respect to lodgism the Conference resolved: "We promise each other that it shall be our earnest purpose to give a fearless testimony, and do our utmost to place our respective church-bodies in the right Christian position in this matter." (*Lutheran*, March 27, 1919.) The results attained by the Conference will be referred for approval to the bodies represented: United Lutheran Church, Joint Synod of Ohio, Iowa Synod, Buffalo Synod, Augustana Synod, United Danish Synod, Norwegian Church, Free Church.

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## The General Synod.

### ORGANIZATION.

11. Discouraging Beginnings. — The oldest Lutheran synods of America are the Ministerium of Pennsylvania, organized 1748; the New York Ministerium, 1786; the Synod of North Carolina, 1803; the Joint Synod of Ohio, 1818; the Synod of Maryland and Virginia, 1820; and the Tennessee Synod, 1820. They embraced about 35,000 members, over one-half of them belonging to the Pennsylvania Synod. On October 22, 1820, at Hagerstown, Md., four of these synods organized as the "General Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in the United States of America," with David Kurtz of Baltimore as president. According to its preamble the Constitution was adopted by the following synods: "The German Evangelical Lutheran Synod of Pennsylvania and the neighboring States, the German and English Evangelical Lutheran Synod in the State of North Carolina and the bordering States, the Evangelical Lutheran Ministerium in the State of New York and the neighboring States and countries, and the Evangelical Lutheran Synod of Maryland, Va., etc." (*Proceedings*, 1829, 49; 1839, 47.) The Pennsylvania Synod was represented by 5 pastors and 3 delegates, the New York Ministerium by 2 pastors, the North Carolina Synod by 2 pastors, and the Maryland Synod by 2 pastors and 1 delegate. Since 1811 C. A. Stork (Storch) and especially Gottlieb Schober (Schober, a Moravian, serving Lutheran congregations) of the North Carolina Synod had been prominent among the promoters of the general body. The "Mother Synod" of Pennsylvania, which at the same time was planning a union with the Reformed, took the initiative in the movement. At the convention at Harrisburg, 1818, they declared it "desirable that the various Lutheran synods should stand in closer connection with each other," appointed a committee to prepare a feasible plan of union, and invited the different synods to send representatives to her next meeting in Baltimore, 1819, where the contemplated Lutheran union was the principal topic of discussion. A tentative constitution, drafted by Schober and a committee

of the Pennsylvania Synod, was approved with 42 against 8 votes and published over the signatures of its officers, — the so-called *Planentwurf*, which, in a somewhat modified form, was adopted 1820 at Hagerstown as the Constitution (*Grundverfassung*) of the General Synod. At the first regular convention of the new body, held at Frederick (Fredericktown, Friedrichstadt), Md., in October, 1821, twenty delegates were present, representing the synods of Pennsylvania, North Carolina, and Maryland-Virginia. It was a beginning fraught with discouragements. Owing to religious indifference, the rationalistic New York Ministerium had immediately permitted its connection to lapse, till resumed in 1837. The Tennessee Synod violently condemned the new body as hierarchical, and because its constitution did not so much as mention the Bible and the Augsburg Confession. The Ohio Synod, which, in 1819, after a discussion of the *Planentwurf*, had approved of the formation of a General Synod, now stood aloof, because a number of her ministers denounced its Constitution, not for confessional reasons, but because of its alleged hierarchical features. (Graebner, *Geschichte* 1, 701.) In 1823 the Pennsylvania Synod declared her withdrawal on account of the union planned with the Reformed, and because some of her congregations, fearing infringements of their liberties, protested against the connection. It was due chiefly to the exertions of S. S. Schmucker, then but twenty-five years of age, that the second regular convention, 1823, in Frederick, was held, the newly organized West Pennsylvania Synod forming the third body required by the constitution.

12. From the Early Proceedings. — The report of 1823 closes as follows: "On bended knees, and with hearts filled with holy emotion, the brethren then united with the Rev. J. G. Schmucker in a most impressive address to the mercy-seat of Christ, in an acknowledgment of the gratitude for the past blessing of the great Head of the Church, and in humble supplication for the future guidance of His Holy Spirit. And when they had sung an hymn, they separated to return to their several abodes." (8.) Regarding the withdrawal of the Pennsylvania Synod, the resolution was adopted: "Resolved, That it is with feelings of deepest regret that we learn from the

minutes of the Synod of Pennsylvania that they were induced by peculiar circumstances, for the present, to recede from an institution which they aided in establishing, and which they still profess to regard as proper and highly beneficial to the interests of the Church; but that this Synod entertain the highest confidence in their brethren of Pennsylvania, and confidently trust that they will without delay resume their connection with the General Synod." (5.) — The "Address of the General Synod to the Evangelical Lutheran Church in the United States," added to the Minutes of 1823, remarks: "Whilst the General Synod, with due deference to the judgment of this respectable Synod, cannot divest themselves of doubt as to the expediency of the temporary recession of the Pennsylvania Synod from the general union of the Lutheran Church, they rejoice that in the very act of withdrawing they declare their unaltered conviction of the propriety and utility of such a union, and intimate that their recession shall continue only until the prejudices against the General Synod shall in some measure have subsided. But, most of all, the General Synod rejoiced in the measures which have already been taken by the brethren west of the Susquehanna, among whose churches these prejudices do not exist, to return to the general union of the Lutheran Church." (11) The minutes of 1823. "Several delegates were absent in consequence of indisposition, but a representation of a majority of the synods in connection with the General Synod being present, the brethren, in reliance on the guidance of the Holy Spirit, proceeded to business." (4.) With respect to the fears expressed by Tennessee that the establishment of a General Synod would endanger both the Lutheran and American liberties, the "Address" of 1823 states: "The brethren of this Conference [Tennessee], as well as individuals in some other sections of the United States, have heretofore doubted the utility of the General Synod; but it is hoped their apprehensions will be dissipated when a few years of experience shall have demonstrated its utility, and when maturer reflection on the nature of our constitution shall have convinced them that, if ever our Church at large should so far degenerate as that a majority of any future General Synod should not only be so void of common Christian integrity, but so destitute of every sentiment of probity and honor, as to

wish those evils which have been feared, still even then the attainments of them would, in our happy government, be physically and civilly impossible." (14) Repudiating the charge of the Tennessee Synod that the object of the General Synod was an amalgamation with other Protestant denominations, and urging the Carolina and Tennessee Synods to cover their doctrinal differences by charity, the "Address" continues: "Whilst the General Synod disclaim the intention which has perhaps, through want of better knowledge, sometimes been attributed to them, namely, to form a union of different denominations, one object at which they aim certainly is to prevent discord and schism among the different portions of the Lutheran Church. It is therefore with much pleasure that they perceive that the Carolina Synod adopted measures at their last session to bring about, if possible, a reconciliation with several brethren [Tennessee Synod], who had seceded from them. And the General Synod cannot forbear recommending to both parties the exercise of that charity, toleration, and forbearance which were so illustriously exemplified in the life of our divine Redeemer, and urging on them the impressive declaration of His Apostle: 'Follow after charity'; 'Charity suffereth long and is kind,' 'seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked'; 'charity beareth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things.' Therefore we beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, 'that there be no divisions among you, but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment.'" (12)

**13. Vigorous Growth Following Disappointments.** — During the period of 1831 to 1864 a large number of district synods joined the General Synod. The Hartwick Synod, organized 1830 in Schoharie Co, N. Y., by seven pastors who had separated from the New York Ministerium in order to satisfy more fully their craving for revivals, was admitted by the General Synod in 1831; in 1908 it merged in the New York Synod. The South Carolina Synod, organized 1824, entered the General Synod in 1835. The New York Ministerium returned 1837. The Synod of Virginia, organized in 1829 by eight ministers and two lay delegates and confessing the Unaltered Augsburg Confession, was admitted by the General Synod in 1839.

The Synod of the West, embracing Kentucky, Indiana, Illinois, and Missouri, of which Wyneken was a member till 1845, was organized in 1835 and united with the General Synod in 1840. In 1846 this body was divided into three parts; one called the Synod of the Southwest, located in Kentucky and Tennessee, another called the Synod of Illinois, located in the State of Illinois, and the third retaining the name of the Synod of the West, located in Indiana. (*Proceedings*, 1848, 47 ) The East Ohio Synod, since 1836 a separate English branch of the Ohio Synod, united with the General Synod in 1841. The East Pennsylvania Synod, founded 1842 by nine ministers withdrawing from the Pennsylvania Ministerium, who advocated the use of the English language, revivals, and greater liberty in the form of worship, was received by the General Synod in 1842. The Allegheny Synod, organized 1842 by ministers and congregations of Western Pennsylvania, united in 1843. The Southwest Virginia Synod was also admitted in 1843. The Miami Synod was organized 1844 in Ohio and joined the General Synod in 1845. The Illinois Synod, a descendant of the Synod of the West, was organized 1846 and joined the General Synod in 1848. When, in 1867, this Synod was dissolved, the greater part amalgamated with the Illinois District of the Missouri Synod. The Wittenburg Synod, organized 1847 in Ohio, was admitted 1848. This body was led by Ezra Keller and S. Sprecher, professors of Wittenberg College, Springfield, O. The Olive Branch Synod of Indiana and adjacent parts was organized in 1848 and received into the General Synod in 1850. In 1894 the Middle Tennessee Synod united with the Olive Branch Synod. Its device is an olive branch upon an open Bible; its motto: "In necessariis unitas, in dubiis libertas, in omnibus caritas." The Pennsylvania Synod reunited with the General Synod in 1853. The Texas Synod, organized 1851 by Rev. Braun (sent by Dr. Passavant) and eight ministers from St. Chrischona, joined the General Synod in 1853, the General Council in 1868, and in 1895 the Iowa Synod as its Texas District. The Synod of Northern Illinois, organized 1851 by English, German, Norwegian, and Swedish ministers in Illinois, Iowa, and Wisconsin, was also admitted in 1853. The Pittsburgh Synod, the so-called "Mission Synod," whose policy was largely shaped by W. A. Passavant, was organized in 1845 and admitted by the

General Synod in 1853. In 1867 it joined the General Council. The Kentucky Synod and the Central Pennsylvania Synod, which was organized in the year 1855, joined the General Synod in 1855. The Synod of Northern Indiana, organized 1855, the Synod of Iowa, organized 1852, and the Synod of Southern Illinois, organized 1856, were received in 1857. In 1897 the Synod of Southern Illinois united with the Synod of Central Illinois as Synod of Central and Southern Illinois. The Melancthon Synod was admitted in 1859; the Franckean Synod, organized 1837, and the Synod of Minnesota, organized 1860, in 1864. The Minnesota Synod joined the General Council in 1867 and in 1872 the Synodical Conference.

14. **Secessions and Accessions.** — The title "General Synod" was for the greater part of her history descriptive of, not what the General Synod was, but what she desired to become. In a letter to Solomon Henkel, dated January 23, 1826, Henry Muhlenberg remarks: "Of the seven Lutheran synods only three belong to the General Synod, and yet its representatives assume the name 'The General Synod of the Lutheran Church in the United States'!" In 1829 there were 74 ministers in the synods connected, and 123 in the synods not connected, with the General Synod. In 1834, of 60,971 Lutheran communicants the General Synod had 20,249 and the Ministerium of Pennsylvania 26,882. In 1860 the Lutherans in America numbered 245,000 communicants, about two-thirds of whom belonged to the General Synod, then embracing 26 district synods with 1,313 pastors and 164,000 communicants. The following decade, however, marked a heavy decrease. Owing to unguarded resolutions with respect to the Civil War, the Southern Synods withdrew, and in 1863 organized the General Synod South. In 1866 the oldest and strongest synods seceded and immediately formed the General Council. The consequent numerical loss was more than 200 pastors and 76,000 communicants. After these reverses a number of smaller synods acceded to the General Synod. In 1867 the Susquehanna Conference, formed in 1845 and belonging to the East Pennsylvania Synod, organized as Susquehanna Synod and resolved to unite with the General Synod. Susquehanna University, at Selinsgrove, is located in her bounds. The Synod of Kansas,

organized in 1868 by ministers and laymen in Kansas and Missouri, was received 1869. Midland College and the Western Theological Seminary are upon its territory. The German Wartburg Synod united 1877. It had been organized 1875 by the German Conference of the Synod of Central Illinois formed at the dissolution of the Illinois Synod in 1866 by ministers who remained loyal to the General Synod, among them Severinghaus, the editor of the *Lutherischer Kirchenfreund*. The *Kirchenfreund* was succeeded by the *Lutherischer Zionsbote*, established in 1896 as a joint organ of the German Wartburg and Nebraska Synods, representing at the same time the German interests of the entire General Synod. The German Nebraska Synod was organized in 1890 and admitted by the General Synod in 1891. Its congregations are located in Nebraska, Kansas, Missouri, Colorado, and the Dakotas. The Wartburg and Nebraska Synods received a part of their ministers from Breklum and Chrischona. As to pulpit- and altar-fellowship and lodge-membership, the Wartburg and Nebraska Synods have not been as liberal as the English Districts of the General Synod. The Rocky Mountain Synod, embracing the territory of Wyoming, Colorado, and New Mexico, was organized in 1891; the California Synod in 1892. The New York Synod was admitted in 1908. In 1859 seven English pastors, withdrawing from the New York Ministerium, formed the Synod of New Jersey. Again in 1866, on account of the withdrawal of the Ministerium of New York from the General Synod, fifteen ministers separated and organized the Synod of New York. In 1872 both united as Synod of New York and New Jersey. This body, in 1908, merged with the Hartwick, Franckean, and Melancthon Synods, thus forming the present Synod of New York. Prior to the Merger in 1918, when the whole Lutheran Church in America embraced 2,450,000 confirmed and 3,780,000 baptized members, the General Synod ranked third in size among the general bodies. It reported 474,740 baptized members, 364,000 communicants, 1,857 congregations, with 1,426 pastors. Apart from a number of benevolent institutions and colleges, the General Synod maintained theological seminaries in Hartwick, N. Y.; in Gettysburg, Pa.; in Springfield, O.; in Selinsgrove, Pa.; in Atchison, Kans.; in Lincoln, Nebr.; in Breklum, Germany. In 1825

S. S. Schmucker was elected professor of Gettysburg Seminary. He served till 1864. The school was opened in September, 1826, with ten students. In 1830 E. L. Hazellius entered as second professor. In 1833 he was succeeded by Charles Philip Krauth, who served till 1867. Among the succeeding professors were H. I. Schmidt, 1839—43, Hay, Brown, C. F. Schaeffer, C. A. Stork, Valentine, Richard, Singmaster. The General Synod supported foreign missions in Liberia and India. "Father" Heyer, a scholar of Helmuth, was the pioneer American Lutheran missionary in India. The chief periodicals are *The Lutheran Quarterly* (now Vol. 42) and the *Lutheran Church Work and Observer*. The *Lutheran Observer*, which merged into the last named organ in 1916, was established in 1831 by Morris and edited by B. Kurtz from 1833 till 1861.

### CHARACTER.

15. Object Not Unity, But Union. — In the *Lutheran Observer*, January 2, 1863, H. Harkey wrote: "Some say that unity must precede union. But the Bible demands that we unite. Hence those who magnify these differences [among Lutherans] and endeavor to keep us separate are the greatest sinners in the Church." This has always been the view of the General Synod: union, irrespective of doctrinal differences. But, while striving after true unity in the Spirit is always and everywhere of divine obligation, external organic union is not an end *per se* divine. And while efforts at organic union, even at their best, always remain a matter, not of Christian duty, but of Christian wisdom and liberty, all endeavors at union which disregard the divine norm of Christian fellowship are anti-Scriptural. At the organization of the General Synod, however, the sole ambition was to unite the whole Lutheran Church in the United States in a well-organized and imposing body. The object was not unity, but governmental union. Dr. Valentine said in 1905: "Though the primary object of its organization was not confessional, but practical, looking to fellowship and cooperation on the basis of acknowledged Lutheran standing, the General Synod at once placed a positive Lutheran basis under its practical work." (*Luth. Cycl.*, 103.) The fact is that the question whether the uniting

bodies were truly Lutheran and in doctrinal agreement was neither asked, nor investigated, nor presupposed, but simply ignored. W. M. Reynolds said in 1850. "The constitution of the General Synod does not present a system of doctrine, a confession of faith. On the contrary, this constitution itself confesses that it was drafted 'only for purposes of government and discipline,' and expressly denies the right 'to any General Synod to make changes in matters of faith which in any way might burden the consciences of brethren.'" (*Lutheraner*, April 30, 1850.)

16. **Conceived in Indifferentism.** — Unionism and indifferentism mark the character of the General Synod from its very beginning. And how could this have been otherwise? The un-Lutheran spirit of the General Synod was not so much acquired as inherited. The Pennsylvania Synod, while promoting the Pan-Lutheran union, was at the same time planning a union with the Reformed! In 1819 and 1822 resolutions were passed to this effect. And before this, in 1792, the same Synod had adopted a constitution in which the Lutheran Symbols were not even mentioned. One of the reasons for severing her connection in 1823 was the fear that the General Synod might prove an obstacle in the way of the contemplated Lutheran and Reformed union. In the New York Ministerium Socinianism ruled supreme. Quitman, for twenty-one years its president, permitted rationalists only in his pulpit, and in 1814, with the consent of his synod, he published a catechism denying the deity and atonement of Christ. F. C. Schaeffer, of New York, in a letter to the convention at Baltimore, 1819, urged the Pennsylvania Synod "to leave nothing undone that might serve, in a proper way, to bring about a union of the different Lutheran synods in the United States." But in the same breath he proceeds: "It is also desirable that another object, of gravest importance, should be duly considered — a closer union between the Lutheran and Reformed churches in our States. In this laudable and truly evangelical cause our brethren in Germany [Prussian Union, 1817] have set us an excellent example . . . as the Lutherans and Reformed in Germany are united in one Evangelical Church, and are no longer separated

as different churches, but form one fold, the true Germans in America will, in this respect, try to imitate the Germans in Germany." (Spaeth, *O P. Krauth*, I, 323.) In North Carolina, where the rationalistic Catechism of Velthusen was used, conditions were no better. Shober, of the North Carolina Synod, who served on the committee appointed for the drafting of the *Planentwurf*, and exerted himself to the utmost in the interest of the Lutheran union, was a Moravian, who, though serving Lutheran congregations, harbored Reformed views and reveled in the prospective dawn of the grand union of all Protestant denominations, to which, according to his views, the General Synod was to serve as a stepping-stone. Accordingly, the aim of the General Synod neither was, nor could be, confessional unity, but, *ad intra*, a mere external organic union, irrespective of doctrinal differences, and *ad extra*, a unionistic intercourse with the Reformed and other Protestant denominations. And throughout its history this has remained the paramount object of the General Synod. In accordance with this policy she has made concessions in both directions, as required by expedience and the circumstances, to doctrinal laxism as well as to Lutheran confessionalism, the latter especially during the last decades. Union was always the primary, true unity hardly ever even a secondary consideration. The plan, however, of sacrificing, in a merger with the Reformed, its own identity as an independent Lutheran body was never directly adopted by the General Synod. It was, partly, in this interest that, in 1862, at Lancaster, the General Synod resolved "that as the erection of Union Churches is not always productive of Christian union and brotherly love, but rather of strife and contention, we recommend to all our ministers and people to build no more such churches." (18.) In its address of 1823 the General Synod "disclaimed the intention to form a union of different denominations." (12.) If by "union" they meant a merger, then the General Synod throughout its history has remained true to the declaration of 1823. For, though always encouraging some sort of union with all evangelical denominations, the General Synod as such has never taken a stand in favor of an amalgamation with these bodies.

## CONSTITUTION.

17. Features of the Constitution. — The charge of Romanism, made especially by the Tennessee Synod against the General Synod, was not without foundation. The *Planenieur* of 1819 provides: "Until, however, the formal permission and consent has been granted by the General Synod, no new established body shall be recognized among us as a ministerium, and no ordination performed by it as valid." This section was omitted in the constitution adopted 1820. The *Planenieur* of 1819 furthermore provides: "The General Synod has the exclusive right, with the consent of a majority of the special synods, to introduce new books for general public use of the churches, as well as to make emendations in the liturgy." (Grachner, *Geschichte*, 1, 691 f.) This section was embodied in the constitution of 1820. According to Article III, Section 2, of the Constitution adopted in 1820, the General Synod reserves for itself the right of approving all such books and writings "as a catechism, form of liturgy, collection of hymns, or confession of faith," proposed for the use of the church. "No synod," the section prescribes, "and no ministerium connected with the General Synod shall therefore publish for public use any new book or writing of the kind mentioned without previously having submitted a complete copy to the General Synod, and heard her opinion, or criticism, or advice in the matter. Whenever the General Synod shall deem it proper, they may propose to the special synods and ministeriums new books or writings of the kind mentioned above for general or special public use. The special synods and ministeriums also shall duly heed a proposal of this kind, and if any one of them should not consider such a proposal appropriate, it is to be hoped that the reasons will be given to the next General Synod, in order that they may be entered in the minutes of the General Synod." (*Proceedings*, 1820, 51.) In the amended constitution of 1835, Article III, Section 2, eliminating the objectionable features, reads as follows: "Whenever the General Synod shall deem it proper or necessary, they may propose to the special synods or ministeriums new books or writings, such as catechisms, forms of liturgy, collections of hymns for general or special public use in the church. Every

proposal of this kind the several or respective synods may duly consider; and if they, or any of them, shall be of opinion that the said book or books, writing or writings, will not conduce to the end proposed, they may reject them, and adopt such liturgical books as they may think proper." (*Proceedings*, 1839, 48.) The first report to the General Synod on the state of the Gettysburg Seminary begins as follows: "In presenting to the *Supreme Judicatory of the Lutheran Church in America* an account of the progress of the institution so recently founded," etc. (*Proceedings*, 1827, 13.) The constitution of 1829, framed and adopted for and recommended to the District Synods, provides for the expulsion and punishment of congregations that refuse to submit to the resolutions of Synod as follows: "If a congregation heretofore connected with a Synod should refuse to obey the resolutions of that Synod or the precepts of this formula [constitution], it shall be excluded from the connection with that synod as long as its disobedience lasts, and without special permission from the president neither any other synod nor a Lutheran pastor or candidate shall serve her." (*Proceedings*, 1829, 30)

18. **Doctrinal Features.** — The *Planentwurf* states: "The General Synod has no power to make or demand any changes whatever in the doctrines of faith adopted heretofore among us." In the constitution of 1820, Art. III, Sect. 2, this was amended as follows: "But no General Synod shall be allowed . . . to introduce such alterations in matters appertaining to the faith, or to the mode of publishing the Gospel of Jesus Christ (the Son of God and ground of our faith and hope), as might in any way tend to burden the consciences of the brethren in Christ." (1829, 51; 1839, 48.) Interpreted historically, this section was evidently intended to make the General Synod safe, not indeed for loyal Lutheranism, but, on the one hand, for evangelicalism over against Unitarianism and, on the other hand, for confessional indifferentism and doctrinal freedom with respect to the distinctive doctrines of the Evangelical denominations. A. Spaeth remarks: "The Radicals, or New-measure men, who in their generation had not heard the Gospel preached and the faith of the Church taught according to the pure Confession of Augsburg, might look upon any at-

tempt to go back to that Confession and to stand by it as an 'alteration, and tending to burden their consciences.' " (1, 334.) It was to serve the same indifferentistic purpose when Article III, Section 5, declares: "The General Synod may give advice or opinion when complaints shall be brought before them by whole synods, or congregations, or individual ministers concerning doctrine or discipline. The General Synod shall, however, be extremely careful that the consciences of the ministers be not burdened with human laws, and that no one be oppressed by reason of differences of opinion on non-fundamental doctrines." (1820, 52; 1839, 40.) The original reading of this section, as adopted 1820, omits the clause "on non-fundamental doctrines" found in the constitution published in the minutes of 1829, thus granting absolute doctrinal freedom. (Graebner, 708.) For the words "human laws" the amended constitution of 1835 substitutes "human inventions, laws, or devices." (1839, 49) Dr Spaeth: "As the bulk of the confessional writings of the Lutheran Church was classified by the leaders [Schmucker, Kurtz, etc.] with 'human inventions, laws, and devices' or, at the very best, with 'non-fundamental doctrines,' any pastor or professor might feel perfectly safe in throwing overboard the mass of these symbolical books and their contents without fear of having to answer for it." (334) Article III, Section 8, evidently intended to satisfy the craving for a closer union with the Reformed and other Evangelical bodies, reads as follows: "The General Synod shall . . . be sedulously and incessantly regardful of the circumstances of the times, and of every casual rise and progress of unity of sentiment among Christians in general, in order that the blessed opportunities to promote concord and unity and the interests of the Redeemer's Kingdom may not pass by neglected and unavailing." (1839, 50; 1829, 53.) — According to Article III, Section 2, quoted in the preceding paragraph, the General Synod claimed the right to propose to the special synods not only catechisms, forms of liturgy, and collections of hymns, but also a confession of faith. Appealing to this section, S. S. Schmucker, in 1855, claimed that he was within his constitutional rights in urging the General Synod to substitute the Definite Platform for the Augsburg Confession. Spaeth: "It was, with a good show of justice, claimed by the American Lutheran side

in the General Synod that the very constitution of the body entitled it to make a new revision even of the Augsburg Confession!" (335) It was in keeping with these principles as well as the conditions then prevailing in the Lutheran synods that the constitution adopted at Hagerstown contained no confessional basis whatever, not even a mere reference to the Augsburg Confession. Shober, probably in order to obviate the charges of the Tennessee Synod, made an effort to have a recognition of the Augsburg Confession incorporated in the constitution, but failed. That the omission was intentional is apparent also from the fact that the General Synod maintained its silence in spite of the vigorous protests of the Tennessee Synod and her refusal to join the general body, especially for the reason that neither the Bible nor the Augsburg Confession was mentioned in its Constitution. "With this constitution before him," says Spaeth, "the editor of the *Lutheran Observer*, Dr. Benjamin Kurtz, in Baltimore, was right in stating the case after this manner (*Lutheran Observer*, April 16, 1852): 'We admit that the General Synod never formally or by express resolution repudiated or abandoned the doctrinal basis (as laid down in the Augsburg Confession and the Catechism of Luther).' But did it ever either formally or tacitly profess belief in that basis? What necessity is there for a body formally to repudiate or abandon what it never received or adopted? It is a notorious fact that the symbolic basis had been abandoned in the Church, to a very great extent, before the General Synod was called into existence, and at its organization special pains were taken to guard against all possibility of its future imposition upon the Church. In defining the doctrinal position of the General Synod, the manifest intention was to give to each other, and to establish for posterity, a pledge that the doctrinal basis should never be allowed to interfere with their consciences." (335 f.)

### EVALUATION.

19. *Serving, in a Way, the Lutheran Church.* — Apart from the name there was nothing of genuine Lutheranism in the constitution of the General Synod. "The name," said Dr. Mann in 1855, "is the most important characteristic of the General Synod." "Hatte man," he continues, "dem Leib

die Knochen und die Eingeweide und das Herz herausgenommen, so konnte man in den leeren Balg hineinschieben, was man wollte, und der Name Lutherisch blieb ja." In a letter dated April 15, 1857, he said of the General Synod: "Wer kann dieses mark- und kraftlose Ding, dieses verwaschene, um jeden individuellen Zug gekommene Gesicht der lutherischen Kirche gerne sehen?" (Spaeth, *W. J. Mann*, 174. 180.) C. P. Krauth declared in 1845: "It cannot be denied that the name Lutherans in this country simply states an historical fact without giving in any case a sure index to the views, feelings, or practises of those who bear it." (Spaeth, *C. P. Krauth*, 1, 119.) Yet, even the mere name, the mere empty skin of Luther, was not without some value. It served as a constant reminder of the lost crown, and kept numerous Lutherans from joining the sects. The union of Lutherans into a general body gave a standing to the Lutheran Church among the denominations, and thus, in a way, strengthened the Lutheran consciousness. It diminished the threatening danger of a merger with the Reformed in Pennsylvania and with the Episcopalians and Presbyterians in North Carolina. And by inserting the confession of "Jesus Christ as the Son of God and ground of our faith and hope" into its constitution, the General Synod may also have acted as a check on the inroads of Socinianism. Furthermore, the General Synod created a certain interest in the Lutheran Church of America abroad, especially in Germany, and roused her energies at home. In 1825 the General Synod established a theological seminary at Gettysburg, Samuel S. Schmucker being its first professor, with a free dwelling and a salary of \$500 for the first year. In the same year it was "resolved that an agent be sent to Europe without delay, in order to receive contributions in moneys and in books for the use of the Seminary; and that our beloved and honored colleague Mr. Benjamin Kurtz be such agent." (8.) The minutes of 1827 report that Kurtz had collected \$12,000. (27.) In 1837 Schmucker made a similar tour in America, collecting from Congregationalists and others \$14,917 for the Seminary Fund. Only if Gettysburg will flourish, said I. Oswald in the Seminary Report of 1837, "we can expect that the Gospel-trumpet will be blown from the Wittenberg in America with the result that the Germans who have settled in the various

States and are scattered in our extended countries (some of whom are famishing for lack of knowledge, and by reason of circumstances are outcasts of the church) will hear and come to adore the Lord in His holy mountain" (1837, 61) In every direction the General Synod developed a lively activity In 1842, the year of the Muhlenberg centennial jubilee, the General Synod made strenuous efforts to raise a fund of \$150,000 for its charitable institutions. (1841, 53 ff.) "What is this sum," it was said, "for a church numbering 100,000 members and more than 25,000 families? It amounts to only \$1.50 for each member, and not even \$10 for every family!" In 1857 the General Synod resolved: "That the churches in connection with the General Synod be recommended to observe our regular ecclesiastical festivals in commemoration of the fundamental facts of our religion, *viz.*: Christmas, Good Friday, Easter, Ascension Day, and Whitsunday, in the hope and persuasion that by the divine blessing they will be found to be, as they have often proved, occasions of reviving to our congregations." (32.) In 1866 the resolution was added: "That it be recommended to the ministers and churches in our connection to celebrate the thirty-first of October in each year in commemoration of the commencement of the Reformation." (42) In 1879, the three hundred and fiftieth anniversary of the publication of Luther's Catechism, the General Synod resolved that we "reaffirm our appreciation of Luther's Smaller Catechism as the best manual of instruction preparatory to church-membership." (39.) In the same year the resolution was adopted: "That in view of the fact that 1880 will be the semi-centennial of the Augsburg Confession, every pastor of the General Synod be requested to preach on that subject on or near the twenty-fifth of June in that year." (40.) The General Synod organized the "Parent Educational Society" for assisting ministerial students; the "Central Missionary Society" for domestic missions; the "Foreign Mission Society" for work in India; and established a "Pastors' Fund," a book company, etc. The General Synod was always on the alert to draw Lutherans in all parts of the country into her circles. Thus, *e. g.*, when, in 1839, the Saxons had arrived in Missouri, the General Synod passed the resolutions: "1. That a special committee be appointed to open a correspondence with the companies of Lu-

therans recently arrived in the United States from Germany, and represented by Dr. Charles Vehse and others, and the Rev. Mr. Stephan; 2. that the committee write in the name of the General Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in the United States, giving a sketch of the history and objects of this body, with any other intelligence which they may think it important to communicate, and requesting of Dr. Vehse and the Rev. Mr. Stephan and their respective associates any information which they may think proper to make relative to their own history, their present situation, and their future prospects." (19.)

20. *Exaggerated Estimates.* — After what has already been said, the following evaluations of the General Synod will be received with a grain of salt. In the "Pastoral Letter" of the General Synod, written in 1831 by David F. Schaeffer, we read: "No church had to contend with so great difficulties as we have overcome by the help of God. As the English language is the language of our fortunate country, the untiring endeavors of our fathers to retain the knowledge of the German language among the youth were futile. Many who spoke German were not able to read this language. The consequences of this state of affairs were pitiable. The religious books of the parents were of no use, and in many cases true piety was gradually lost as well as the love for our Zion. In the mean time some Christian denominations who held their service in the English language were ardently endeavoring to promote the interest of religion and the growth of their churches. But the God of an Arndt, Spener, Francke, and of many other renowned founders and benefactors of our Church still lives. In this most critical moment, when our Church, which is distinguished for the simplicity of its service, the purity of its doctrines, and the excellency of its church-discipline, was about to sink into oblivion, just at this important moment the General Synod was brought into existence, and through this body the Theological Seminary and College grew up which now are in efficient operation and in a flourishing condition. Now our children may be instructed in all the different branches of the sciences by pious and well-trained teachers of our faith. Now, by our Seminary, the Church may be supplied with learned and

pious preachers, who are able to instruct their hearers in both languages. And from this institute they will always go forth as brethren, inspired by the same spirit and led by the same principles." (*Proceedings*, 1831, 22.) In 1857, Krauth, Jr., defending the General Synod, said: "She is the offspring of a reviving Lutheranism, born in the dawn that followed the night which fell upon our Church in this land, when the patriarchal luminaries of her early history had set on earth to rise in heaven. When the General Synod came into being, Rationalism still was in the ascendant in Europe. The names of Gabler and Bietschneider, of Wegscheider and Roehr, were names which had been held high in honor in the Lutheran Church in Germany. That Church had become what such men might have been expected to make her. Where their influence prevailed, she had become rotten in doctrine, destitute not only of the power of godliness, but even of the decencies of its forms, and ready, at the command of a royal devotee of Dagon, for a conjunction which she once would have regarded as the adding of a scaly tail and fishy fin to the fair bust of woman; but the bust was as fishy as the tail now, and they were frozen into happy conjunction. But this was not the Lutheranism which the General Synod desired to plant and perpetuate in the New World. When the Lutheran Church looked around her in her adopted land, she saw ignorance of her principles and prejudices of every hue prevailing against her. When she looked to her native land, all was thick darkness there. What was there on this side of the Atlantic or beyond it to inspire hope? Why not abandon the experiment as a thing foregone, and yield to the process of absorption into surrounding sects? It was at this crisis that the life of the Church displayed itself in the formation of the General Synod. The formation was a great act of faith, made, as the framers of her Constitution sublimely express it, in reliance 'upon God our Father, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, under the guidance and direction of the Holy Spirit in the Word of God.' The framers of that Constitution should be as dear to us as Lutherans as the framers of our Federal Constitution are to us as Americans. When the General Synod became completely organized by the acknowledgment of the doctrinal Articles of the Augsburg Confession as a standard of faith, it was the only voluntary body on earth

pretending to embrace a nation as its territory, and bearing a Lutheran name, in which the fundamental doctrines of Lutheranism were the basis of union. The General Synod was a declaration, on the part of the Lutheran Church in America, that she had no intention of dying or moving, that she liked this Western World and meant to live here. And she has lived and waxed stronger and stronger, and the General Synod has been a mighty agent in sustaining and extending her beneficent work, and is destined to see a future which shall eclipse all her glory in the past. Heaven pity the fate of the man who looks upon the General Synod as having been a curse to the Church, or an inefficient worker in it—who imagines that Lutheranism would be stronger if the General Synod were weaker, or that truth would be reared upon the ruins of what she has been patiently laboring for nearly forty years to build." (Spaeth, 1, 383.)

**21. Spaeth and Jacobs on the General Synod.**—After referring to the unionistic, rationalistic, and Socinian degeneration in the Pennsylvania and New York Ministeriums prior to the organization of the General Synod, A. Spaeth continues: "With this powerful influx of rationalism, and with the tendency of the remaining positive elements of our Church to assimilate and unite themselves with the surrounding 'Evangelical Denominations,' there was evident danger for the Lutheran Church in America of losing her historical connection with the fathers, and surrendering the distinctive features for which they contended, and as a religious society becoming simply a member of the Reformed family. At this point of threatening disintegration and dilapidation, the first steps were taken toward the establishment of the General Synod, which was certainly an honest effort to improve the state of affairs, to gather the scattered members of our Lutheran Church, and to preserve her as such on this Western Continent. Viewed in this light, the formation of the General Synod was 'an offspring of reviving Lutheranism,' as Dr. Krauth called it. But the difficulty and danger arose from the fact that two conflicting and irreconcilable elements tried to unite in it with a sort of compromise, the one, latitudinarian, un-Lutheran, unwilling or unable to prize the treasures of the Mother Church

of the Reformation, and overanxious to exchange them for Puritan legalism and Methodistic 'new measures'; the other, conservative, holding on to the inheritance of the fathers, and hoping almost against hope to bring the Church back to their good foundation. If the former element succeeded in keeping out of the General Synod's original constitution any direct and outspoken reference to the historic confession of the Lutheran Church, the latter might have thought themselves secure in the provision which denied to the General Synod the power 'to make or demand any alteration whatever in the doctrines hitherto received by us.' But the first-named party, at the outset, had the popular sympathy on its side; it was the 'American' over against the 'foreigner'; it was aggressive, and had the advantage of having able and determined leaders, and thus, during the first twenty-five years of the General Synod's history, easily ruled the day, while the Lutheran consciousness of the second party slowly awoke from its slumbers, and those that were to be its leaders on the day of battle were quietly maturing from boyhood into manhood." (1, 320.) H. E. Jacobs, endeavoring to view the origin of the General Synod in its historical context, writes: "The General Synod must be regarded as a very important forward movement, and its influence as beneficial. It necessarily was not without the weaknesses that characterized the Lutheran Church in America at that time. One who ignores the entire historical development will find much to criticize and condemn, when examined from the standpoint of what is demanded by consistency with accurate theological definitions and clear conceptions of church polity. But he will find just as much that incurs the same judgment in the proceedings of the synods that united to form it. The faults peculiar to each synod were lost, while only the common faults of them all remained. The General Synod was a protest against the Socinianizing tendency in New York and the schemes of a union with the Reformed in Pennsylvania and with the Episcopalians in North Carolina. It stood for the independent existence of the Lutheran Church in America, and the clear and unequivocal confession of a positive faith. It failed, as its founders in the several synods had failed, in specifically determining the contents of this faith. It was not ready yet, as these synods were not ready, to return

to the foundations laid by Muhlenberg and his associates, and from which there had been a general recession from twenty-five to thirty years before. Lament defects as we may, the General Synod saved the Church, as it became anglicized, from the calamity of the type of doctrine which within the New York Ministerium had been introduced into the English language" (*History*, 361 f.)

### DOCTRINAL BASIS.

22. **First Statement on Doctrinal Position.** — The "Address of the General Synod to the Evangelical Lutheran Church in the United States" of 1823 contains the following reference to the doctrinal attitude of the General Synod: "An acquaintance with the history of the Christian Church in the past ages, as well as a knowledge of her present condition throughout the world, establishes the fact that mankind are prone on this subject to fall into contrary extremes; some maintaining that if our external conduct be correct, it matters not what we believe, and others contending that as long as our creed is sound, the Church has little to do with private deportment. But the principle which the General Synod conceive to be taught in Scripture, and which they would recommend to the Church at large, is this, that we should view with charity, and treat with forbearance, those who have fallen into an aberration of non-fundamental importance either from the faith or the practise of the Bible and the Augsburg Confession; and on the other hand, that we are bound 'not to eat with a fornicator, or a covetous, or an idolater, or a railer, or a drunkard, or an extortioner,' but to 'put away from among us such wicked persons,' and that 'a man that is an heretic,' who denies a fundamental doctrine, a doctrine essential to the Christian scheme, we are in like manner bound 'after the first and second admonition to reject.'" (14.) A fair analysis of this document yields the propositions: The General Synod receives the Bible and the Augsburg Confession. It distinguishes between fundamental and non-fundamental doctrines and aberrations from both. It holds that some of the doctrines of the Bible are not fundamental. It also holds that some of the doctrines of the Augsburg Confession are not fundamental. It enumerates neither the doctrines of the Bible nor of the Augsburg Con-

fession regarded as non-fundamental. It defines fundamental doctrines as doctrines essential to the Christian scheme, hence, non-fundamental doctrines as not essential to the Christian scheme. Indirectly it admits that a doctrine essential to the Lutheran scheme is not necessarily a fundamental doctrine or a doctrine essential to the Christian scheme. It admits the inference that not all of the doctrines of the Augsburg Confession are essential to the Lutheran scheme. It denies that all the doctrines of the Augsburg Confession are essential to the Christian scheme. It holds that non-fundamental aberrations from the Christian scheme are not subject to church discipline. It also teaches that denial of some of the doctrines of the Augsburg Confession is not a matter of church discipline. In brief, the General Synod, according to the Address of 1823, held that there are errors subject to discipline, while others are not, but defined and enumerated neither the former nor the latter. It failed to draw a line of demarcation between the doctrines which may, and which may not, be denied with impunity. Indeed, the Constitution adopted 1820 speaks of "Jesus Christ as the Son of God and ground of our faith and hope." (Art. III, Sec. 2.) Possibly, however, the General Synod was not ready in 1823 to enforce the ban on Socinianism. That the sentiment against it was hardly as pronounced as is frequently assumed, appears also from the fact that the General Synod, in 1825, appointed a committee to prepare a hymn-book, liturgy, and a collection of prayers, in the English language, "adhering particularly to the New York Hymn-Book and German Liturgy of Pennsylvania as their guides." (11.) The New York Hymn-Book referred to was Quitman's and the Pennsylvania Liturgy the one of 1818, both tainted with rationalism. In the resolutions, however, adopted in the same year with respect to the Gettysburg Seminary, Jesus is confessed as "God over all, blessed forever." (5.) And the Pastoral Letter of 1829 declares that the Church is in need of a confession of faith in order to protect herself against the Socinians. (17.)

**23. Gettysburg Subscription Limited.** — At the time of the organization of the General Synod, Samuel S. Schmucker and F. C. Schaeffer of New York apparently occupied a rela-

tively advanced confessional position. According to a letter of Schmucker, dated Princeton, February 20, 1820, they had promised each other to labor with all earnestness that the Augsburg Confession should be raised again from the dust, and that every one subscribe to its twenty-one articles, and declare before God, by his subscription, that they agree with the Bible, not *quatenus*, but *quia* (Singmaster, *Dist. Doct.*, 44.) In 1826 Schmucker wrote, in defense of the Lutheran doctrine of the Person of Christ: "Only lack of insight and of clearness of intellect can mislead an honest opponent to impute a contradiction to the doctrine when it denies that the glorified body of Christ has the properties and is subjected to the laws which we call properties and laws of matter" (*Lutheraner*, April 12, 1852.) When, in 1825, the statutes for the government of the Seminary at Gettysburg were adopted, it was at the instance of Schmucker, the first chairman of the faculty and for nearly forty years a teacher at the Seminary, that the General Synod declared "that in this Seminary shall be taught in the German and English languages, the fundamental doctrines of the sacred Scriptures as contained in the Augsburg Confession of Faith," and that any professor may be removed "on account of error in fundamental doctrines, immorality," etc. (5.) Article 1, Section 2, of the Constitution of the Seminary, drawn up by Schmucker and adopted by Synod, states that the Seminary is designed "to provide our churches with pastors who sincerely believe, and cordially approve of, the doctrines of the Holy Scriptures as they are fundamentally taught in the Augsburg Confession" Another article requires every professor-elect to publicly pronounce and subscribe the following declaration: "I believe the Augsburg Confession and the Catechisms of Luther to be a summary and just exhibition of the fundamental doctrines of the Word of God." And when Schmucker, September 5, 1826, was inducted into the "professorship of Christian theology," D. F. Schaeffer, who delivered the charge, said: "As the Lord has signally favored our beloved Church, as her tenets are Biblical, and her veriest enemies cannot point out an important error in her articles of faith, no more than could the enemies of the truth at the Diet of Worms prove the books of the immortal Reformer erroneous, therefore the Church which entrusts you with the preparation and

formation of her pastors, demands of you (and in her behalf I solemnly charge you) to establish all students confided to your care in that faith which distinguishes our Church from others. If any should object to such faith, or any part of it, or refuse to be convinced of the excellence of our discipline, they have their choice to unite with such of our Christian brethren whose particular views in matters of faith and discipline may suit them better. I hold it, however, as indispensable for the peace and welfare of a Church that unity of sentiment should prevail upon all important matters of faith and discipline among its pastors. Hence I charge you to exert yourself in convincing our students that the Augsburg Confession is a safe directory to determine upon matters of faith declared in the Lamb's book." (Spaeth, I, 336.) Accordingly Dr. Jacobs interprets the Gettysburg pledge as follows: "It was a pledge to a distinctively Lutheran position. Such an affirmation could never have been enforced in the proposed Lutheran-Reformed seminary which the ministerium [of Pennsylvania] had had in mind. It could not have been exacted of those who believed the confession to be in error on those points which divide the Lutherans from the Reformed. In justice, however, to those who might seem to have been acting a false part in making this affirmation while they believed the confession to contain errors, it must be stated, on the other hand, that the full force of the declaration was not so clearly apparent in a period directly following one when, as we have seen, the greatest living theologian of the Lutheran Church in America could distinguish no difference between the Augsburg Confession and the formularies of the Church of England." This interpretation appears to be in agreement with the solemn charge of Schaeffer, according to which the pledge refers to "that faith which distinguishes our Church from others." However, Schmucker and his successors viewed the phrase "fundamental doctrines of the Word of God" as a restriction, limiting the subscription to the doctrines confessed by all evangelical denominations, thus eliminating from the pledge distinctive Lutheran doctrines. And the historical correctness of this view has never been satisfactorily refuted. Schmucker declared time and again: "The Augsburg Confession was not to be followed unconditionally; its binding force was expressly limited to the

fundamentals. The professor's oath expressly limits our pledge to the Augsburg Confession to the fundamental doctrines of the Scriptures." He wrote: "After the abandonment of the General Synod, in 1823, by the Synods of Pennsylvania and New York, that body was chiefly sustained by the zeal and activity of younger men, in connection with a few beloved fathers who remained with us. At the very next meeting of the General Synod, in 1825, I had the pleasure, as well as honor, to introduce, for the first time in the history of that body, the recognition of the Augsburg Confession. At that time there were none amongst the friends of the General Synod who did not reject several tenets of the Augsburg Confession, such as private confession and absolution, as we all still do. Accordingly, the assent to the Augsburg Confession, expressed in the statutes for the Theological Seminary presented by me, was a *qualified* one; it should and was intended to bind only to the *fundamentals* of the Scriptures as taught in the Augsburg Confession. The language was well understood then, and was deemed clear and satisfactory; it has always been interpreted in the same way since, except by some, of late, whose predilections would incline them to find in it, if possible, some support for their more rigidly symbolic views." (Spaeth, 1, 338.) In the *Evangelical Review*, April, 1851, Schmucker declared: The General Synod established her theological seminary "not for the purpose of teaching the symbolic system of the sixteenth century, — for her leading members had all relinquished some of its features, — but, as her Constitution, adopted in 1825, explicitly declares, to prepare men to teach, not all the doctrines or aspects of doctrine in the Augsburg Confession, but the '*fundamental doctrines*'; and not those aspects of doctrine which might be considered fundamental peculiarities of that Confession, but '*the fundamental doctrines of the Scriptures*,' those aspects of doctrine which Christians generally regard as fundamental truths of the Word of God. The symbolical books of the General Synod and the seminary at Gettysburg are the Bible and the Augsburg Confession, as a substantially correct exhibition of the fundamental truths of the Bible. To this the professorial oath of office in the seminary adds a similar *fundamental* assent to the two Catechisms of Luther. For the professors to inculcate on their students the obsolete views of the

old Lutherans contained in the former symbols of the Church in some parts of Germany, such as exorcism, the real presence of the body and blood of Christ in the Eucharist, private confession, baptismal regeneration, immersion in baptism, as taught in Luther's Larger Catechism, etc., would be to betray the confidence of those who elected them to office, and to defeat the design of the institution" (Spaeth, 1, 338 f)

24. **Doctrinal Statements from 1829 to 1835.** — The Pastoral Letter of the convention of the General Synod in Hagerstown (Haegerstadt), 1829, contains the following statements: The object of the General Synod is not to introduce absolute uniformity also in non-essential doctrines; such a unity did not exist in the early Christian congregations; it is sufficient to adhere to the fundamental tenets of the Reformation; every teacher and layman is entitled to use his Bible without being bound by any human confessions; the General Synod merely demands acceptance of the fundamental doctrines of the Gospel as taught in the Augsburg Confession, and leaves everything else unlimited; but she does not agree with those who absolutely reject all confessions of faith; the Church is in need of a confession in order to protect herself against the Socinians; most of the confessions, however, have lost themselves into minute (*spitzfindige*) and doubtful dogmas, and thus encouraged the spirit of superstition and schism, and naturally must continue to do so, the longer, the more; in every one of the different orthodox [evangelical] denominations, frequently, indeed, in the same congregation, there are persons who differ as much in their opinions as the confession of their Church differs from that of other Churches; accordingly, there is no reason why synods bearing the name of Luther should not unite with the General Synod, though differing in their views as to non-fundamentals; the General Synod has no power to call members of individual synods to account for aberrations in doctrine or life; the most it can do is to admonish such a synod to investigate the matter; however, a synod refusing to demand orthodoxy in fundamentals can be expelled from the General Synod; in brief, the four synods now constituting the General Body are so many independent ecclesiastical jurisdictions, united only in

order to promote brotherly love, and to combine their forces in the execution of such things as are of general benefit, and which no individual synod could perform. (16 ) "The General Synod therefore," says the letter of 1820, "only demands of those who are connected with her that they hold the fundamental doctrines of the Gospel as they are taught in the Augsburg Confession, and leaves all other things unlimited." "Why, then," the letter continues, "should not all those synods of our country that bear the name of our immortal Luther, and have always yet retained the chief traits of this sublime Reformer, be united by the tender bond of the General Synod, notwithstanding the different opinions which they may entertain in some points which do not touch the foundation of the Augsburg Confession?" (16.) It was in accordance with the sentiments expressed in this letter when the General Synod at the same convention in Hagerstown adopted for its district synods a constitution with a form of licensure and ordination containing the questions: "Do you believe the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments to be the Word of God and the only infallible rule of faith and practise?" "Do you believe that the fundamental doctrines of the Holy Scriptures are taught in a manner substantially correct (wesentlich richtig) in the doctrinal articles of the Augsburg Confession?" (43. 45.) Prior to 1864 the General Synod as such, however, was not in any shape or manner committed to the Augsburg Confession constitutionally. In 1835, when the Constitution was amended, Synod as such remained non-committal. The doctrinal basis then adopted and embodied in the Constitution does not mention the Augsburg Confession. It reads as follows: "All regularly constituted Lutheran synods holding the fundamental doctrines of the Bible as taught by our Church, not now in connection with the General Synod, may at any time become associated with it by adopting this Constitution and sending delegates to its convention, according to the ratio specified in Art. II." (*Proceedings* 1830, 49.) Evidently this deliverance, though marking an advance over the Constitution of 1820, intentionally omits a direct reference to the Augustana. Till 1864, then, the exact constitutional basis of the General Synod as such was not the Augsburg Confession, but the indefinite phrase: "the fundamental doctrines of the Bible as taught by

our Church." All other confessional deliverances of the General Synod till 1864 may be summarized as follows. The fundamental doctrines of the Bible, *i. e.*, the doctrines in which all evangelical (non-Socinian) Christians agree, are taught in a manner substantially correct in the doctrinal articles of the Augsburg Confession.

25. "A Solemn Farce." — The doctrinal basis of the General Synod, prior to 1864, is limited in more than one way. It does not embrace all of the Lutheran symbols. It includes only the twenty-one doctrinal articles of the Augustana. It binds only to the fundamental articles of the Bible. It presupposes that fundamental articles are such only as are agreed to by all evangelical Churches. It leaves the question whether all of those twenty-one articles of the Augsburg Confession are to be regarded as "fundamental doctrines of the Bible" undecided. It adopts the articles of the Augsburg Confession regarded as fundamental, not simply and absolutely, but merely as "substantially correct." On the question of the ordination form of 1829 Krauth, Jr, commented in 1857 as follows: "What, then, is that question? We reply, in general: First, that the subject of her general affirmation is not the Book of Concord as a whole, but simply and purely the Augsburg Confession. Secondly, that not the entire Confession, but only the twenty-one articles of it which treat of doctrine, are specified in the affirmation. Thirdly, that only so far as these articles embrace *fundamental* doctrines does she make an affirmation. Fourthly, that of these she affirms that they teach the doctrines in a correct manner, and defines the correctness as a *substantial* one." (Spaeth, 1, 386) J. L. Neve explains: "They [General Synod] considered what the Lutheran Church has in common with the other churches, and looked upon this as the fundamentals of Christianity, while the characteristic peculiarity of the Church of Luther, her special inheritance, was set aside as non-fundamental and unessential." (*Geschichte*, 90.) Accordingly, the General Synod, prior to 1864, did not subscribe to the distinctive doctrines of the Lutheran Church, but only to the doctrines held in common by the evangelical churches of Protestantism. Charles Philip Krauth, who was styled a Symbolist and Old Lutheran by the latitudi-

narians, declared in 1850, in his address before the General Synod at Charleston: "The terms of the subscription [to the Augustana] are such as to admit of the rejection of any doctrine or doctrines which the subscriber may not receive. It is subscribed or assented to as containing the doctrines of the Word of God substantially, they are set forth in substance; the understanding is that there are some doctrines in it not contained in the Word of God, but there is no specification concerning them. Every one could omit from his assent whatever he did not believe. The subscription did not preclude this. It is at once evident that a creed thus presented is no creed; that it is anything or nothing; that its subscription is a solemn farce." (Spaeth, 1, 370.)

### BASIS INTERPRETED.

26. Authentic Explanation of Doctrinal Basis. — In his *Popular Theology*, published for the first time in 1834, S. S. Schmucker wrote: "The General Synod of the Lutheran Church has adopted only the twenty-one doctrinal articles, omitting even the condemnatory clauses of these, and also the entire catalog of Abuses corrected. No minister, however, considers himself bound to believe every sentiment contained in these twenty-one articles, but only the fundamental doctrines. Accordingly, the pledge of adoption required at licensure and ordination is couched in the following terms . . . : 'Do you believe that the *fundamental* doctrines of the Word of God are taught in a manner *substantially* correct in the doctrinal articles of the Augsburg Confession?' The Lutheran divines of this country are not willing to bind either themselves or others to anything more than the fundamental doctrines of the Christian revelation, believing that an immense mass of evil has resulted to the Church of God from the rigid requisition of extensive and detailed creeds. . . . We can see no sufficient warrant for any Christian Church to require as a term of admission or communion greater conformity of view than is requisite to harmony of feeling and successful cooperation in extending the kingdom of Christ. . . . Had the early Protestants endeavored to select the principal and fundamental doctrines of Christianity, required a belief of them from all applicants for admission into their ranks, and agreed among

themselves that discrepancy of views on matters of non-fundamental nature should neither be a bar to ecclesiastical communion nor fraternal affection, they would have saved the Church from the curse of those dissensions by which piety was in a great degree destroyed and on several occasions the very foundations of Protestantism shaken." (Edition of 1848, 50 ff.) In 1850, attacking Reynolds in the *Lutheran Observer* on account of his defection from American Lutheranism, Schmucker stated: From the very outset the General Synod had abandoned the distinctive Lutheran doctrines, and nevertheless retained the Lutheran name; in spite of his deviations from the Lutheran symbols he, with perfect right, could call himself a faithful Lutheran. (*L.*, 6, 139.) Schmucker, "the most authentic interpreter of the Constitution of the General Synod and that of its theological seminary," never identified the "fundamental doctrines of the Bible" with the twenty-one articles of the Augsburg Confession. According to him the fundamentals are obtained by striking from the Augustana everything that is objectionable to any Evangelical Church and retaining the remainder as the substance of Protestantism. All of the fundamental doctrines, Schmucker declared, are contained in the ecumenical creeds; everything else is trans-fundamental, not required by the General Synod for Christian union and communion. In his sermon at the convention in Winchester, 1853, Schmucker maintained that the essential, fundamental doctrines in which the General Synod demands agreement, are "the cardinal doctrines of the Reformation, the points of agreement between the different creeds of the sixteenth century," distinctive doctrines being points of non-essential, non-fundamental difference. According to Schmucker the General Synod's motto, "Uniformity in fundamentals and charity or liberty in non-fundamentals," never meant anything else than uniformity in the doctrines in which the evangelical denominations agree, and liberty with respect to distinctive tenets, also those of Lutheranism. In his *Lutheran Manual* of 1855 Schmucker wrote: "The founders of the General Synod were men of enlarged, liberal, and Scriptural views of the kingdom of Christ. Convinced of the gradual abandonment of the whole mass of symbolical books in Germany, as well as from the personal examination of them, of their want of

adaptedness to the age, they regarded it as the grand vocation of the American Church, released by Providence from civil servitude, to reconstruct her framework, assuming a more friendly attitude toward sister churches, and so organizing as to promote Scriptural union among Protestants, and to bring up our church-institutions to the increased light of Biblical study and Providential development. This enlightened, this millennial attitude of the founders of the General Synod, the writer can confidently affirm, from personal knowledge, having been well acquainted with the greater part of them, and having been present at Baltimore in 1819, when the formation of the Synod was, after ample discussion, resolved on; and at Hagerstown, in 1820, when the Constitution was formed. But the Constitution speaks for itself; for it invested the General Synod with power to form a new Confession of Faith, and new catechisms, suited to the progress of Biblical light and the developed views of the Church. Subsequently it was believed that the necessities of the case would be best met by the retention of the Augsburg Confession, on account of its importance as a link in the chain of historical Christianity, and by prescribing its *qualified* adoption, *viz.*, as to the fundamental aspects of Scripture doctrine. . . . It is an incontestable fact, which can easily be established, that the original standpoint of the General Synod, whilst controlled by the Pennsylvania Synod, was rejection of the binding authority of the old confessions. This is undeniably proved by their not even naming the Augsburg Confession in their Constitution, by their declining even a qualified recognition of it, and by their inserting a clause expressly giving authority to the General Synod to form a confession of faith; yea, even going further, and giving the same authority to each District Synod also. (See the original Constitution, Article III, Section 2.) It seems to me no intelligent and unprejudiced mind can resist this conclusion as to their doctrinal standpoint, whilst I and others who were present know it to have been as above stated." In his manuscript notes Schmucker says: "It is worthy of constant remembrance that during the first four centuries, under the immediate pupils of the inspired apostles and their successors, the voice of the universal Church under the whole heaven was that nothing more than fundamental agreement

should be required for communion in the Christian Church and Christian ministry. Not a single orthodox church practised differently. All required assent only to the several ecumenical confessions, the so-called Apostles' and the Nicene Creeds. . . . No, the practise of binding the conscience of ministers and members to extended creeds, containing minor points, on which men in all churches and all ages have differed and ever will differ, and thus splitting up the Body of Christ without His authority, is, and must be, highly criminal. The fathers who founded the General Synod all considered the recognition of fundamentals as sufficient, and here, in this free country, determined to return to the practise of the earlier and purer centuries of the Church. These fathers were Drs. J. G. Schmucker, George Lochmann, C. Endress, F. W. Geissenhainer, Daniel Kurtz, H. A. Muhlenberg, P. F. Mayer, H. Schaeffer, and D. F. Schaeffer, Rev. Gottl. Shober, and Rev. Peter Schmucker, with their younger collaborators, Drs. Benjamin Kurtz, S. S. Schmucker [Charles Philip Krauth?]. Holding this opinion, they did not introduce any recognition, even of the Augsburg Confession, into their original Constitution in 1820. But at the third meeting, in 1825, they adopted certain resolutions for the foundation of the theological seminary and statutes for its government, and bound its professors to the fundamental doctrines of Scripture as taught in the Augsburg Confession. They thus returned to the principles and practise of the earlier and purer centuries of the Church, when the influence of the Savior and His inspired apostles was more sensibly felt in the Church." (Spaeth, 1, 342. 337. 354.)

27. "Lutheran Observer" Interpreting Basis. — Apart from its coarseness and fanaticism, especially during the thirty years' editorship of Dr. B. Kurtz, the *Lutheran Observer* has throughout its existence, from 1831 to 1916, always been an essentially correct exponent of the original doctrinal and confessional attitude of the General Synod. Consistently a General Synodist cannot disown the *Observer* without renouncing the General Synod itself. Now, according to the *Observer*, the General Synod has always stood for unity in essentials, or fundamentals, and liberty in non-fundamentals, understanding by fundamentals those doctrines only in which Evangelical

Christendom is agreed, and by non-fundamentals distinctive tenets, also those of Lutheranism. Quoting from Dr. S. Sprecher's inaugural address at Wittenberg College, Springfield, O., the *Lutheran Observer*, October 26, 1849, declared that Lutherans [of the General Synod], in adopting the confessions, "do not bind their conscience to more than what all evangelical Christians [denominations] regard as fundamental doctrines of the Bible. We are bound to believe only that the sublime plan of the Gospel is taught in the Augsburg Confession. This is the position held by the General Synod and by the American Lutheran Church in general, and this seems to have been the position also of the Church in the earlier and purer days of the Reformation." (*L.*, 6, 57.) In 1860 the *Observer* declared that the General Synod was organized on the basis of a compromise with respect to doctrines of minor import, such as the doctrine of the Lord's Supper, of the power of Baptism and of absolution. *Observer*, April 8, 1864: "We ought to be one in the doctrine of faith which embraces the fundamental doctrines of Christianity, while we should practise love with respect to other things. By fundamental doctrines we understand such and such only as are necessary to make a man a true child of God. . . . Who can be a Christian and deny the essence and existence of God, Christ, and the Holy Spirit, the atonement, the doctrines of repentance and faith in Christ, the necessity of justification before God and of sanctification of the heart, or the moral law as the rule of life, the doctrine of immortality and our future destination? These doctrines, which are essential to faith and Christian life, are fundamental and ought to be received by the heart and practised, while all other doctrines may be necessary more or less in order to perfect the Christian character and render it more symmetrical, but do not strike the heart of true religion." (*L. u. W.*, 1864, 154.) *Observer*, March 12 and 19, 1869: "The doctrinal basis of the General Synod demands adoption of the fundamental doctrines of the Word of God as taught in the Augsburg Confession, but she has never determined which doctrines she regards as fundamental and which not. Formerly she was satisfied with the general judgment of the Protestant world with respect to the fundamental articles of Christianity . . ., but during the last decade the question was ex-

tensively discussed: What is fundamental? We see no reason why the General Synod could not and should not supplement her basis by a definition and enumeration of the fundamental doctrines . . . According to the universal judgment of the Church the doctrinal opinions in which the orthodox Protestant Churches differ are not fundamental, but non-fundamental doctrines. Whether God's decree of election is absolute or conditional; whether the corruption of the fallen nature of Adam was propagated or only the guilt of his sin was imputed to his descendants; whether the atonement is universal or limited to the elect; whether justification occurs by the imputation of the righteousness of Christ to believers or by the imputation of faith; whether the presence of Christ in the Lord's Supper is bodily or spiritual; whether the receiving of body and blood is by faith or by the mouth, is limited to believers or extends also to unbelievers; whether the church government is participated in by laymen or limited to the ministers; whether the Scriptural principles on this matter establish an hierarchy or democracy — these and many other questions are differently answered by different Protestant denominations, but without objectively destroying the ground of faith or subjectively the essence of faith. . . . In short, the doctrinal views which still separate the Protestant churches are not fundamental." (*L. u. W.*, 1869, 121.)

28. Krauth on "Fundamentals Substantially Correct." — The essential correctness of Schmucker's and the *Observer's* interpretation of the General Synod's doctrinal basis was acknowledged also by Charles Porterfield Krauth. "The very life," said he, "the very existence of the General Synod depends upon the distinction between fundamentals, in which agreement is required, and non-fundamentals, in which liberty is granted." And while his father had condemned the confessional basis of the General Synod as a "solemn farce," Krauth, Jr., in 1857, declared: "Let the old Formula stand and let it be defined." In the *Missionary*, April 30, 1857, Dr. Krauth explained: "The doctrinal basis of the General Synod, then, was designed to be one on which, without sacrifice of conscience, brethren differing in non-fundamentals might meet. It is a basis which, on the one hand, neither by ex-

pression nor by implication charges error upon any part of the doctrinal articles of the Confession, but as far as it touches the question at all, expresses or implies the very opposite; a basis, therefore, on which brethren who receive the Confession without reservation can rest, but which, at the same time, on the other hand, defines its position only as to what is fundamental, leaving entirely untouched the questions whether non-fundamental doctrines are taught in the Confession, and whether, if taught, they are taught in a manner substantially correct. Furthermore, in using the word 'substantially' to qualify the term 'correct,' in the affirmation as to fundamentals, the General Synod meant, not to decide, but to leave untouched the question whether, as to its very letter as well as in its essentials, the Confession is a correct exhibition of Scripture doctrine. The position, in effect, implied this: Brethren may differ as to whether the non-fundamental doctrines as well as the fundamental doctrines are correctly stated in the Confession. Let them differ. We make no decision whatever as to that point. Both agree as to *fundamentals*: therefore fundamentals only shall be the object in this subscription. We affirm of them that they are taught correctly in the Confession. Of the non-fundamentals we affirm nothing and deny nothing. Neither their reception nor rejection has anything to do with this basis. But brethren differ on another point. Some receive the very letter of the Confession on all points of doctrine; others, who receive it to the letter on most points, receive it only as to its main drift on a few. Let, then, that which is apart from the substance be left out of view, and be the subject neither of affirmation nor of denial. Let us make the affirmation simply on the *substantial* correctness of the Confession, for on that all are agreed. Here, too, shall be the same absolute freedom to *receive* what is apart from the substance as to *reject* it." Dr. Krauth proceeds: "The basis of the General Synod, then, does not imply that non-fundamentals are falsely taught, or that the correctness of the Confession on fundamentals is *merely* substantial. The questions which touch non-fundamentals, or matters apart from the substance, are *simply waived* and left undetermined. Thus interpreted, the most devoted friend of the Confession, in all its parts, as well as he who is compelled to make a reservation as to some por-

tions, can freely use the Formula. It was the best basis possible, under all the circumstances, and we are therefore satisfied with it." "If, when the General Synod affirmed that the *fundamentals* were correctly taught, she had declared or implied that the non-fundamentals were incorrectly taught, no Lutheran who believed that the Augsburg Confession is sound on *all* the doctrinal points it touches, or who believed that none but fundamental doctrines are set forth in the Confession, could have received the Formula. She satisfied herself, therefore, with an affirmative about fundamentals, making neither an affirmation nor denial in regard to non-fundamentals. She left the synods in absolute freedom in non-fundamentals, freedom to doubt, to reject, or to receive them." "So also when she declared that the fundamentals of Scripture-doctrine are taught in a manner *substantially* correct, she neither declared nor implied that they were not taught in a manner absolutely correct, but . . . as all who believe that they are set forth in a manner *absolutely correct*, believe, necessarily, that they are taught in a manner *substantially* correct; for that which is absolute embraces that which is substantial and something more; she simply makes an affirmation, so far as two classes of thinkers are agreed, affirming nothing and denying nothing as regards that in which they differ, but having absolute freedom to doubt, reject, or receive that which goes beyond the substance, and embraces the minutiae of the form. The man who has a quarrel with this position of the General Synod has a quarrel not against something incidental to her, but against her very life. For on this position, expressed or implied, rested, and continues to rest, the ability of our General Synod to have a being." (Spaeth, 1, 402. 399 401. 395 f) According to Krauth, then, there was constitutional room in the General Synod for Schmucker and Kurtz as well as for Walther and Wyneken; room for all who accept the fundamental doctrines in which evangelical Christians agree, but deny the distinctively Lutheran doctrines, and room also for men who confess all doctrines of the Lutheran Symbols. As late as October 29, 1863, Krauth declared in the *Lutheran and Missionary* that there was nothing in the Basis of the General Synod to bar even the Missouri Synod from entering it with the whole mass of confessions in her arms. (*L. u. W.*, 1863, 378.) Dr. Krauth

overlooked the fact that a Lutheran who adopts the symbols *ex animo*, and does not merely carry them in his arms, is serious also with respect to the confessional damnatuses with which a unionism and indifferentism, as required by the General Synod, is absolutely incompatible. In 1901 the *Lutheran Quarterly* said: "The damnatuses at the conclusion of several of the articles of the Augsburg Confession are inconsistencies . . . fundamental contradictions with the positive sense of the Confession." (359.) The *Quarterly* could have said, and probably wanted to say, that these damnatuses are fundamental contradictions with the doctrinal basis of the General Synod. In complete agreement with Krauth, the *Observer* wrote September 11, 1903: "The General Synod affirms and emphasizes what is universal in Lutheranism, and leaves the individual at liberty, within this generic unity, to receive and hold for himself whatever particularities of Lutheran statement may commend themselves to his acceptance. The only liberty denied him is that of forcing the particular upon his brethren who are content to rest in the full acceptance of what is universal in Lutheranism. It allows the same liberty in practise." (*L. u. W.*, 1903, 305.)

### UNIONISM.

**29. Early Attitude.** — The unionism which prevailed in all Lutheran synods since the days of Muhlenberg was freely indulged in also by the General Synod during the whole course of her history, in various ways, especially in the exchange of fraternal delegates and the fellowship of pulpit and altar. In 1825 the General Synod published with great satisfaction a letter received from Dr. Planck, of Göttingen, stating: Though there was in Germany no hope for a union of Protestants and Catholics, the sectarian hatred between the Lutherans and the Reformed had abated, indeed, disappeared, inasmuch as a complete union of them had been effected in Prussia, Hesse, Nassau, the Palatinate, Baden; these "re-unions" had been brought about under conditions which guaranteed their permanence, since both parties had convinced themselves that there was no difference of views among them with respect to the foundation of faith, and had agreed that

the difference which might still exist with respect to some points of the Lord's Supper could no longer be a hindrance to their unity of faith and spirit; this union, inasmuch as the parties no longer regarded themselves as divided, really existed in all Protestant states of Germany, even where, as yet, it had not been acknowledged formally (24 f.) According to the Proceedings of 1827 "the Synod was gratified by the deep interest evinced by this letter [of Dr Planck] in the affairs of our Church in the United States, and received the good wishes of its distinguished author with grateful feelings. The corresponding committee was directed to answer this communication." (5 ) It was in keeping with the spirit of Planck's letter that the minutes of 1827 furthermore recorded: "The following gentlemen were present and [were] admitted as advisory members . . . : The Rev Mr. Helfenstein, of Philadelphia, as delegate from the Bible Society in that city; and Rev. Mr. van der Sloot, as delegate from the General Synod of the German Reformed Church" (5 ) "Resolved, That the General Synod of the Ev. Lutheran Church in the United States regard with deep interest the exertions of the American Tract Society, and recommend the design of said society to the churches under their care; to give it their aid by the formation of auxiliary societies, and such other means as have been recommended by the parent institution." (7.) "Rev. Mr Hinsch appeared and presented to this body the minutes of the German Reformed Synod, and received a seat as an advisory member, whereupon it was resolved that an equal number of the minutes of this Synod be sent to the Synod of the German Reformed Church." (8 ) "The subject of publishing a new hymn-book in the German language, adapted to the joint use of Lutheran and Reformed Churches, was now taken into consideration. After some discussion it was resolved that as the joint hymn-book for the Lutheran and Reformed Churches now in use is introduced in a large number of our congregations, as it is possessed of considerable merit, and as the introduction of a new one would be attended with much expense to our congregations and confusion in worship, therefore the General Synod deem it inexpedient to publish or recommend the introduction of a new one in the churches under their care." (11.)

"Rev. N. Sharrets was appointed as delegate to the Synod of Ohio, and the Rev. B. Kurtz and Rev. J. Schmidt as delegates to the German Reformed General Synod." (12) *Proceedings*, October, 1829: "Resolved, That a committee be appointed to report on the proceedings of the German Reformed Synod." (6) "The delegates of the German Reformed Synod, the Revs. Brunner and Beecher, were cordially received as advisory members" (4.) The constitution adopted 1829 for the District Synods provides: "Ministers, regular members of other synods or of sister churches [sectarian denominations], who may be present or appear as delegates of such bodies, may be received as advisory members, but have no vote in any decision of the Synod." (31)

**30. Exchanging Delegates, Pulpits, Ministers.** — In 1847, in a letter to Ph. Schaff, W. J. Mann describes the relation of the General Synod to the Methodists and Presbyterians as a "concubinage" with the sects. (Spaeth, *W. J. Mann*, 38) The extent, nature, and anti-Lutheran tendency of this unionism appears from the minutes of the General Synod. At Hagerstown, 1837, a Presbyterian, an Episcopalian, a Reformedist, and a Methodist were received as advisory members. Two Lutheran ministers preached in the Reformed church, two others in the Methodist church, and Dr. Patton, of the American Education Society, in the Lutheran church. At Baltimore, 1848, delegates of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church and of the Dutch Reformed Church were received as advisory members. (5.) The minutes of the German Reformed Synod were received and submitted to the examination of a committee. (9.) Delegates were appointed to the Presbyterian and the German Reformed Church. (11.) At Charleston, 1850, delegates were appointed to the German Reformed, the Presbyterian, the Cumberland Presbyterian, and the Congregational Church. It was also resolved that "the minutes [of the General Synod] be sent to the Congregational Association of New Hampshire, to the Assembly of the Cumberland Presbyterians, to the Constitutional Assembly of the Presbyterian Church, and to the Synod of the German Reformed Church." (28.) At Dayton, O., 1855, sixteen sectarian ministers were seated as advisory members. (7.) At Reading,

1857, the Committee on Ecclesiastical Correspondence reported: "With the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church we have now been in correspondence for twelve years, and every interchange of delegates only strengthens the conviction expressed at its commencement, that it 'would draw more closely the bonds of Christian union, and so level the mountains and elevate the valleys of sectarianism as to prepare the way of the Lord in His coming to millennial glory.' We rejoice to-day to greet a delegate from that large and influential body of Christians, and tender to him our Christian salutations and brotherly love" (41.) At Pittsburgh, 1859, where fourteen sectarian ministers were invited to seats in the convention, the same committee stated: "The most interesting point to which your committee would call the attention of the General Synod is the prompt and cordial response of the Northern Provincial Synod of the United Brethren (Moravian) to the overture for correspondence made to them at our last meeting in Reading. Like ourselves, they acknowledge the Augsburg Confession as their common bond of union, and have, ever since the commencement of the last century, sustained a peculiar and intimate relation towards our Church. It is only by discipline and forms of church-government that we are separated, and we trust that the step which has now been taken will draw us still more closely together, and tend to our mutual edification and progress in Christian activity as well as in brotherly love." (30) At Lancaster, Pa., 1862, the delegate to the German Reformed Church reported "that he was most kindly received by that body, and was charged by the same to return its cordial salutations to this Synod, with the hope on the part of our German Reformed brethren that the present fraternal correspondence between our Churches, twin-sisters of the Reformation, may never be interrupted. The President of that body was appointed as delegate to this Synod, and we rejoice to see him present with us now and taking an active interest in our proceedings." (64.) The delegate to the Moravian Church declared that "he takes great pleasure in stating that the fraternal greetings which he was charged to convey to the brethren were most cordially reciprocated, and the earnest desire expressed that the correspondence, so auspiciously begun between the two bodies, might be continued." (64.) At Lancaster it

was also recommended to the District Synods that with respect to the Reformed, Presbyterian, and other Churches they adopt the rule: "Ministers and members in good standing, desiring to pass from one of these bodies to the other, shall, upon application to the proper body, receive a certificate of their standing." (16.) In accordance with this rule the *Lutheran Observer*, May 17, 1867, advised Lutherans moving West to unite with sister denominations until a Lutheran congregation should be established at the place. (*L. u. W.* 1867, 182.) At York, Pa., 1864, where sermons were delivered by Lutheran ministers in eight sectarian churches, S. S. Schmucker, delegate to the German Reformed Church, reported that "an invitation was given him to address the Synod, and that the feelings of Christian fellowship which he took occasion to express were cordially and liberally responded to by the presiding officer of the Synod" (31.) Dr. Sprecher, then President of the General Synod, said in response to the address of the delegate from the Presbyterian Church who had spoken of the unity of all Christians, and assured the convention of the sympathy of his brethren with its work, that he was happy to see that the time of exclusiveness of the different denominations had passed by, and that the Church was becoming more liberal in its views in granting greater liberty in non-fundamental articles. (*L. u. W.* 1864, 220.)

**31. Exchanging Delegates, etc., Continued.** — At Fort Wayne, 1866, where delegates were appointed to the German Reformed Synod, the Presbyterian Church, the Moravian Church, and the Evangelical Church Union of the West, S. Sprecher, delegate to the Presbyterian Church, reported that he was most cordially received, that the fraternal greetings of this body were most heartily responded to by the moderator of the Assembly, and that "on your delegate's quoting, in his address, the Article of the Constitution of this General Synod, inculcating the duty of Christian union, as one of the earliest instances, if not the very first, of an ecclesiastical body's formally expressing such sentiments on this subject, he was pleasantly interrupted by a hearty expression of applause." (36.) In the minutes of the convention held at Washington, 1869, we read: "Dr. Gordon, the delegate

from the Reformed (Dutch) Church, then addressed the Synod. The address was characterized by a truly earnest and Christian spirit, and by assurance of a hearty purpose to cooperate with us in every noble effort for the glory of God and the salvation of men. His allusions to Romanism were especially timely and truthful. The President responded in an address, happily conceived and forcibly expressed. On motion it was resolved that the overtures of the corresponding delegate of the Reformed Church concerning the proposed convention for the formation of church union and cooperative agency against a common foe be submitted to a committee to report during the present sessions of Synod." (26.) The delegate of the Presbyterian Church addressed the Synod "in a very pleasant and appropriate address. His kind expressions of good will and sympathy and Christian love were warmly responded to by the President." (27.) The delegate to the German Reformed Church reported: "An opportunity was granted to your delegate to present the Christian salutations of our General Synod, to which the President of their body responded in a warm, fraternal, and most fitting manner." Delegate to the Presbyterian General Assembly: "My intercourse with the brethren of the General Assembly was peculiarly pleasant and satisfactory." (13.) The delegate to the "Unitas Fratrum" (Moravians) stated "that he was most cordially received by the brethren. There is something of the simplicity and love of primitive Christianity about them that renders their assemblages charmingly attractive. The spirit of the Master was evinced in all their doings. Their discussions of some points of church-practises, diverging from their accustomed order, were spirited and thorough, but conducted in the scope of the Pauline sentiment: 'Be kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love, in honor preferring one another.'" (34.) The General Synod declared: "Our principles not merely allow, but actually demand, fraternal relations with all Evangelical Christians, and especially with other Lutheran bodies in this country." (68.) At Canton, O., 1873, where Lutheran ministers preached in ten sectarian churches, the following letter of greeting from the United Brethren was read: "Our conference and Church duly appreciate every mark of good feeling and regard of sister denominations towards us, and admire the

spirit which prompts it, which says, 'We are brethren,' 'We are one.' We are glad to note that the sharp corners of denominational antagonism are wearing away, that the watchmen are seeing eye to eye, that Christians can labor side by side in the common cause and in the same altars, and meet at the same communion, and each rejoice in the other's success. We also remember, with the utmost pleasure, the intimacy of some of the eminent men of your connection with the fathers of our connection, — instance Dr. Kurtz and W. Otterbein, — and trust that the sacred mantle of brotherly love which the fathers possessed may fall upon the sons to many generations. We rejoice in the marked tendency to fraternal union among the evangelical churches of the United States, and are hopeful that we may get near together in all the essentials of Christian oneness. We take great pleasure in appointing a fraternal messenger to your general meeting at Canton, O" (34.) At Carthage, Ill., 1877, delegates were appointed to the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church, the Reformed (Dutch) Church, the Reformed (German) Church, the National Council of the Congregational Churches, the United Presbyterian Church, the Cumberland Presbyterian Church, the Provincial Synod of the Moravian Church, the United Brethren in Christ, and to the Evangelical Synod of the West. (26.) At Altoona, Pa., 1881, the following letter was received: "The Presbyterian Church greets, in the name of Christ, her twin-sister, the Evangelical Lutheran Church, born in the throes of the same spiritual reformation, sharing in common a glorious protesting history, marked with glorious deeds and names dear alike to both, a common glorious heritage, kindred symbols and polity, and a work for Christ side by side. May grace, mercy, and peace from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ be with all your ministers and congregations." (54.) At Omaha, Nebr., 1887, thirty ministers of the General Synod preached in 18 sectarian churches, etc. Similar facts are recorded in the minutes of the General Synod down to its last convention in 1917.

**32. Altar-fellowship Practised and Encouraged.** — At Hagerstown, 1837, after a sermon delivered by Dr. Bachmann, "the brethren, united with many followers of Christ, of our own as well as of sister-churches, celebrated the Lord's Sup-

per." (3) At Philadelphia, 1845, the General Synod "cordially approves of the practise, which has hitherto prevailed in our churches, of inviting communicants in regular standing in either church [Lutheran and Reformed] to partake of the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper in the other, and of the dismission of church-members, at their own request, from the churches of the one to those of the other denominations." At York, 1864, and at Fort Wayne, 1866, the report of the Liturgical Committee was adopted, which contained the resolution "that on all subjects on which difference of doctrinal sentiment exists" (*e. g.*, the distribution formula in the Lord's Supper), "Scripture-language, suited to either or both views, is to be employed without comment" (1864, 26; 1866, 23.) The result was that the union distribution formula was embodied in the Communion liturgy. The *Observer*, July 21, 1865, calling upon all Lutherans to join the General Synod, said: "And even if we, as Luther and the Reformed ministers at Marburg, do not think alike on the presence of the Lord in the Lord's Supper, let us have love to those who are in error, and pray God that He would enlighten them. What an offense to see so many thousands of intelligent and pious Lutherans live together like Jews and Samaritans though they all confess [?] the doctrines of the immortal Reformer and want to be disciples of Him who said: It will be one flock and one Shepherd" In 1868 the *Observer* reported that at Findlay, O., Lutherans, Presbyterians, Methodists, Congregationalists, Weinbrennerians, and United Brethren celebrated the Lord's Supper in the Presbyterian Church, and adds: "That was a celebration of the Lord's Supper in the true spirit of the Gospel." (*L. u. W.* 1868, 95) In 1894 a conference of General Synod pastors in, and in the vicinity of, Pittsburgh published, in substance, the declaration: "We have open communion, and invite to it all members of the Evangelical Protestant Churches" (*L. u. W.* 1895, 58.) Till 1899 the Communion formula of the "Ministerial Acts" of the General Synod contained a general invitation to all members of other Churches in good standing or to all who love the Lord Jesus (*Luth Quarterly* 1909, 33.) Though followed by a marked decrease in the indiscriminate invitation to the Lord's Supper, the omission of 1899 implied neither a criticism nor the abolishment of the un-Lutheran

practise In 1900 Pastor Butler wrote in the *Evangelist* that he agrees with the brethren who make the Lord's Supper a communion with the Low- and High-Church Episcopalians, the Methodists, Baptists, Presbyterians, Congregationalists, etc "It is men of Dr Storr's type," says Butler, "who, of all others, commend Christianity to thoughtful and devout people who care but little for the tweedledum and tweedledee shadings of truth, which divide the religious world." (*L u W* 1900, 246 ) Dr. Valentine, in the *Lutheran Cyclopaedia* of 1905: The General Synod "enacts no restrictive law against fellowship in pulpit or at altar, but allows to both ministers and members the freedom of conscience and love in this matter." (195.)

**33. Other Forms of Unionism.** — In his pamphlet *The General Synod and Her Assailants* J. A. Brown writes: "The General Synod was to aim not only at union among Lutheran synods, but to be 'regardful of the circumstances of the times, and of every casual rise and progress of unity of sentiment among Christians in general, in order that the blessed opportunities to promote concord, and unity, and the interest of the Redeemer's kingdom may not pass by neglected and unavailing.' This she has done by entering into correspondence with other denominations, and joining in general efforts to evangelize the world. She has cooperated with the American Bible and Tract Societies, and Sunday-school Union, and like agencies, and excited the contempt of her enemies by these 'unionistic efforts.' But it is believed she thus secured the approval of God and of His true Church, of whatever name." (24 ) At Frederick, 1831, the Sunday-school Society of the General Synod appointed Dr. Hazelius and the treasurer of the society to publish German Sunday-school books and tracts in connection with a committee of the Reformed Sunday-school Society. (29.) At Baltimore, 1833, a committee was appointed to report on the advantages or disadvantages of a union between the Reformed and Lutheran Churches. At Hagerstown, 1837, the General Synod adopted the report of their committee stating with respect to the proceedings of the East Pennsylvania Synod: "The proceedings contain a resolution to be concerned as much as possible about a closer union with the Church of Christ, and that a complete union of the Evangelical

Lutheran and of the Evangelical Reformed Churches would have the most blessed results." (10) At the same convention the "Foreign Mission Society of the Evangelical German Churches in the United States" was founded, which, however, did not prove a success, having a temporary existence only. According to its constitution, the Society was to embrace all churches or individuals of German descent agreeing with the constitution and making an annual contribution. (39) Moravians and Reformed were among its officers. The letter addressed in the interest of this Society to the Reformed and other German Churches, inviting them to cooperate, states: "It is our ardent desire that the German Church as such be united in this matter. . . . Because union in this as well as in all other matters is desirable for the sake of peace, of Christian fellowship, and of true piety, . . . we, therefore, cordially invite you, dear brethren [of the Reformed Churches, etc.] to cooperate. It matters not who leads the way, as long as he is in the right way" (44.) Synod resolved "that the invitations [to join the Foreign Mission Society] which had been extended to all German Churches without exception, suggest an appropriate admonition that, being convinced that we all are brethren in Christ, our sectarian divisions should be forgotten, and that they offer an occasion for the brotherly cooperation of two Churches which are so close to each other by national descent, similarity of doctrine, geographic neighborhood, and matrimonial relationship." (13.) Synod furthermore declared "that according to the meaning of this Synod the plan which is adopted should include a connection with the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions." (13) At Chambersburg, 1839, B. Kurtz presented a resolution in reference to some plan for a union of effort in the Foreign Missionary field with "our brethren of the German Reformed Church." (33.) At the same convention the Foreign Mission Society proposed organic union with the German Reformed. At Philadelphia, 1845, the General Synod approved of the Reformed publications of the American Tract Society, as also of those of the American Sunday-school Union, and of the extension of the former's operations to the German population. At New York, 1848, the

Evangelical (Union) Synod of the West was invited to join the General Synod. The same convention resolved that they "regard with great pleasure the successful operations of the American Tract Society, among the destitute population of our land, and will cheerfully cooperate with them as opportunity may offer." (23) A similar resolution was adopted in 1864, at York (*L. u. W.* 1864, 284) At Dayton, O, 1855, the General Synod declared its undiminished confidence in the American Sunday-school Union, and cordially commended it to the support and hearty cooperation of all churches (23) In 1859 (March 23) the *Olive Branch*, edited by Dr. S. W. Harkey, stated that many congregations connected with the General Synod were still using the union hymn-book. Throughout its history ministers of the General Synod served both Lutheran and sectarian congregations. (*L. u. W.* 1880, 190.) In 1863 Harkey proposed a union of all Lutherans in America on the basis of the fundamental Christian doctrines, *i. e.*, the doctrines held in common by all evangelical Protestants, including the doctrine of the divine obligation of the Sabbath which the Augsburg Confession rejects (*L. u. W.* 1863, 91.) Reporting Dr. Crosby's statement with respect to the differences of the old- and new-school Presbyterians, "We can agree to disagree," the *Observer* exclaimed: "Oh, that the intolerant dogmatists of the Lutheran Church would have attained such a degree of Christian love and common sense!" (July 12, 1872) In 1857 the arch-unionist Philip Schaff wrote in *Rudelbach-Guericke's Zeitschrift*: "To us America seems to be destined to become the phenix grave of all European churches and sects, of Protestantism and Romanism." The General Synod was certainly not a slacker in contributing her bit to fulfil this prophecy.

#### UNION LETTER OF 1845.

**34. Overtly Renouncing Lutheranism.** — In 1845, at Philadelphia, the General Synod appointed a committee to address, in a letter, the Evangelical Church in Germany, in order to defend herself against alleged detractors of her Lutheranism. But the signers of this letter, Schmucker, Kurtz, Pohlmann, Morris, and H. I. Schmidt (then professor in Hartwick Seminary), while believing that they were serving this purpose, in

reality made an unreserved confession of the General Synod's complete apostasy from the Lutheran faith and Church. The letter states. The General Synod requires only essential agreement in doctrinal views, strict conformity being impossible in America. Peace can be maintained only by an eclecticism, which adheres to essentials and passes over non-important matters. Accordingly, the position of the General Synod is not that of the Old Lutherans, but of the Union Church in Germany. "Now, as to our doctrinal views, we confess without disguise, indeed, confess it loudly and openly, that the great majority of us are not Old Lutherans in the sense of a small party [Breslauer], which in Germany bears this name. We are convinced that, if the great Luther were still living, he himself would not be one of them." "In most of our church-principles we stand on common ground with the Union Church of Germany. The distinctive views which separate the Old Lutherans and the Reformed Church we do not consider essential; and the tendency of the so-called old Lutheran party seems to us to be behind our age." "The great Luther made progress throughout his life, and at the end of his career considered his work unfinished." The General Synod, the letter continues, agreeing with Luther and the symbols in all essential points, was endeavoring to complete his work. "The peculiar view of Luther on the bodily presence of the Lord in the Lord's Supper has long ago been abandoned by the great majority of our ministers, though some few of the older German teachers and laymen still adhere to it. Regarding the nature and meaning of the presence of the Lord in the Supper, liberty is allowed as in the Evangelical [Union] Church of Germany. The majority of our preachers believe in a peculiar presence and in a peculiar blessing of the Lord, but of a spiritual nature only." "Nevertheless, we are Evangelical Lutheran. . . . We believe that we may, as honest men, still call ourselves Lutherans." The letter continues: Instead of organizing a separate Evangelical [Union] Church, as it exists in Germany, ministers coming to America should unite with the General Synod. They must, however, not come with the purpose of remodeling the American Lutheran Church according to European standards, which would but lead to failure, strife,

and separations. Similar attempts had been made by German brethren through the *Kirchenzeitung* [in Pittsburgh] and in Columbus Seminary, with the result that the paper was losing its support and the seminary was now suspended (*Lutheraner* 1846, 43 f. Spaeth, I, 330—348.) This blunderful letter was published in Germany in the *Zeitschrift fuer Protestantismus und Kirche*, Vol. 11, No. 4, Schmucker, Kurtz, and Morris being personally present in Germany to defend the letter. Loehe remarked: "We hope that they will carry the conviction from Germany that a time has arrived different from the one when Kurtz first preached and collected in Germany" (*Kirchl. Mittheilungen*, 1846, 48.) A consequence of the letter was that, in 1846, four ministers (Kunz, Wier, Isensee, and Meissner, who immediately organized the Indianapolis Synod, which, however, had a temporary existence only) left the Synod of the West, declaring that they could no longer continue their connection with the General Synod because in her letter she had publicly confessed that she had abandoned a part of the Lutheran doctrine long ago (*Lutheraner* 1846, 11.)

**35. Letter Never Disowned by Synod.** — The letter of 1845 is a frank confession and adequate expression of the spirit of unionism then prevailing in the General Synod. Indeed, several years later (1852, 1856), H. I. Schmidt, who had signed the letter, expressed his belief in the Lutheran doctrine of the Lord's Supper, and Dr. Morris declared the letter "the greatest blunder" ever committed by the General Synod. The General Synod as such, however, has never criticized, renounced, or withdrawn the letter. Moreover, in 1848, at New York, the letter, in a way, received official recognition by the General Synod (19. 20. 50) In his *Denkschrift* of 1875 Severinghaus explains: "Even if this letter should have expressed the views of the great majority, it is, nevertheless, only the testimony of a committee, which indeed was never disavowed by the General Synod, but which can have no greater significance than was given it by the authority of the committee of that time." But Severinghaus continues: "Besides, it is *still* true that the majority among us are not old-Lutheran, and that, in general, we occupy common ground with the Union Church of Germany in most of our church-principles." The truth is that the

leaders of the General Synod, in 1845, did not occupy higher, on the contrary, even lower ground than the Lutherans in the Prussian Union. They were not merely unionists, but Calvinists, Puritans, and Methodists, openly defending Reformed errors and practises. While the greater portion of the Prussian Union retained the Lutheran doctrines and usages, the great majority of the General Synod had sacrificed everything specifically Lutheran: doctrines, liturgy, Scripture-lessons, church-festivals, customs, robes, etc. Loche declared in 1863 that the General Synod was a Union Church, more so than any in Germany.

**36. Actions in Keeping with Letter.** — A number of subsequent actions of the General Synod were in perfect agreement with the compromising letter of 1845. At New York, 1848, the General Synod resolved "that Profs Reynolds, Schmidt, and Hay be a committee to correspond with the Evangelical Synod of the West, for the purpose of establishing fraternal intercourse between them and this Synod, and also with a view to the union of all parts of the Evangelical Church in the great work of preaching the Gospel to the German population of the West, and with a reference to the organization of all parts of our Church in this country upon a common basis." (23.) At Dayton, O, 1855, the committee (W J. Mann and S. W. Harkey), appointed to open a correspondence with the Evangelical Church Union of the West, report "that they addressed a letter to the Synod named, which was favorably noticed in their proceedings, and a delegate appointed by them to meet with us at this time." Harkey was appointed as delegate to their next meeting. (15) At Pittsburgh, 1859, the delegate to the same body stated: "I wrote to that body, expressing the very deep interest which we feel in their union. The communication was very fraternally received and a delegate appointed to meet us at this convention of General Synod, who is now present." (32.) At the same convention the committee on Ecclesiastical Correspondence remarked: "You were pleased to hear Mr. Dresel's [delegate of the Evangelical Church Union of the West] statements by which you are assured of the near relationship of the body which he represents to the Lutheran Church generally. They, too, recognize the Augs-

burg Confession as a part of their confessional basis, although they have modified it by the admission of the Heidelberg Catechism and other Reformed Confessions to equal authority, standing as they do upon the basis of the United Evangelical Church of Prussia and other parts of Germany. It is not our business here to criticize the action of the State authorities in Germany by which that Union was established, or of our brethren who found themselves in this country sympathizing with the Church in which they had there been reared. It was enough for this body to be assured that these brethren are of an evangelical character, holding the great doctrines of Protestantism, and zealously laboring for the diffusion of Christian knowledge and unfeigned piety among their countrymen, especially in the great valley of the Mississippi. Although distinct in doctrinal position and church organization, our relations to them here are of the most interesting character, and you will be pleased to hear of the progress which they are making in various departments of Christian labor." (30.) At Washington, in 1869, the delegate to the Evangelical Church Union of the West reported: "These brethren are earnestly at work in the Master's cause, and in full sympathy with our General Synod. Hoping that our fraternal relations may grow stronger each revolving year," etc (29.) In 1857 and 1859 the same cordial attitude was assumed toward the Evangelical Church Diet (Kirchentag) in Germany, a letter, in behalf of the Diet, having been received from Bethmann-Hollweg, then Secretary of ecclesiastical affairs in Prussia. (*Proceedings* 1857, 21. 24; 1859, 32. 37. 38.) In 1909 the General Synod approved of the admission (in 1907) of the *Vereinslutheraner* within the Prussian Union into the "Allgemeine Evangelisch-Lutherische Konferenz." (22.) Siding with the Evangelicals, the *Lutheran Observer*, October 9, 1863, declared: "The Evangelical Union of the West forms a wholesome balance against the old-Lutheran tendency of the Missouri Synod." (*L. u. W.* 1863, 379.) It was, therefore, not in dissonance with the traditions of the General Synod, when, as late as 1909, the *Lutheran Evangelist* proposed a union of the General and Evangelical Synods, maintaining that General Synodists and Evangelicals were natural allies. (*L. u. W.* 1909, 180. 421.)

## CHRISTIAN UNION.

37. "Father" of Evangelical Alliance. — At Chambersburg, Pa., 1839, the General Synod passed the resolution "that the thanks of this Synod be presented to the American Society for the Promotion of Christian Union *for this acceptable present.*" The present received by the members of Synod was Schmucker's "Appeal to the American Churches" or "New Plan of Apostolic Protestant Union." The purpose of this book was to promote union among the Protestant denominations on the basis of the ecumenical confessions. It proved to be a powerful factor in the movement which resulted in the organization of the Evangelical Alliance. Schmucker himself, together with Kurtz and Morris, attended the "World's Convention" at London in 1846, where they united with 800 ministers of 50 different denominations in founding the Alliance, which assumed the motto: "*Unum corpus sumus in Christo,*" Schmucker, in particular being feted as the "Father" of this union. Naturally enough also the General Synod took a lively interest in the Alliance, though it was not a union of churches or of representatives of churches, but of individual Christians who were in sympathy with its aims. In 1869, for example, the General Synod "resolved that the delegates to the World's Evangelical Alliance, appointed at Harrisburg, be continued with the addition of Rev S. Sprecher, D D., and Rev. S. S. Schmucker, D. D." (64) At the international conferences of the Alliance the General Synod was regularly represented, also at its last convention in 1914 at Basel. On a local meeting of the Alliance in 1902, at Easton, Pa., the *Lutherische Kirchenblatt* (General Council) reported, in substance, as follows: "More than 60 delegates were present: Baptists, Methodists, Congregationalists, Evangelicals, Free Baptists, Lutherans (General Synod and General Council), Mennonites, Moravians, Presbyterians, Episcopalians, Reformed, Reformed Presbyterians, and United Evangelicals. Resolutions formulated by a committee, of which Dr. Alleman of the General Synod was a member, were unanimously adopted according to which members of one congregation may be received by another in a manner 'that no question of church-polity or doctrine need ever arise.' It was furthermore resolved that in smaller cities and

country congregations union services be held throughout the state." (*Observer*, Dec 26, 1903 ) The following nine articles, which Schmucker viewed as a sufficient basis for every kind of Christian union and cooperation, were adopted by the Alliance at London: "1. The divine inspiration, authority, and sufficiency of the Holy Scriptures. 2 The right and duty of private judgment in the interpretation of the Holy Scripture. 3. The unity of the Godhead and the trinity of Persons therein. 4 The utter depravity of human nature in consequence of the fall 5 The incarnation of the Son of God, His work of atonement for sinners of mankind, and His mediatorial intercession and reign. 6. The justification of the sinner by faith alone 7. The work of the Holy Spirit in the conversion and sanctification of the sinner. 8 The immortality of the soul, the resurrection of the body, the judgment of the world by our Lord Jesus Christ, with the eternal blessedness of the righteous and the eternal punishment of the wicked. 9. The divine institution of Christian ministry, and the obligation and perpetuity of the ordinance of Baptism and the Lord's Supper."

38. "Apostolic Protestant Union." — The plan of Christian Union hatched by Schmucker and recommended by the General Synod is delineated in a report presented 1848, at New York, by the Committee of Conference on Christian Union appointed at the previous session of the General Synod, as follows: "The kind of union to which this body was disposed to invite the several evangelical denominations, and in which she felt it a duty and a pleasure to lead the way in hope of virtually healing the 'Great Schism' of Protestantism, is also definitely delineated by the following portraiture: 'The design to be aimed at shall be not to amalgamate the several denominations into one church, nor to impair in any degree the independent control of each denomination over its own affairs and interests, but to present to the world a more formal profession and practical proof of our mutual recognition of each other as integral parts of the visible Church of Christ on earth, as well as our fundamental unity of faith and readiness to cooperate harmoniously in the advancement of objects of common interest.'" (11.) "An article was prepared in which, after a glance at the solemn injunction of the Savior and His

apostles to preserve unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace, the nature and extent of the union prevailing in the primitive churches was delineated as consisting of the following features: a. unity of name; b. unity in fundamental doctrines, whilst diversity in non-essentials was concealed; c. mutual acknowledgment of each other's acts of discipline; d. sacramental and ministerial intercommunion; e. convention of the different churches of the land in synod or council for mutual consultation or ecclesiastical regulation" (12.) "In contrast with this picture of primitive union, the present deplorable divided and conflicting state of the Church was delineated . . . In hope of removing the principal evils of these denominational divisions, your committee projected a scheme of Christian union based on the following four preliminary principles for the guarantee of the rights of individual conscience and denominational religious liberty: 1. This plan must require of no one the renunciation of any doctrine or opinion believed by him to be true, nor the profession of anything he regards as erroneous; nor does the accession of any denomination to this union imply any sanction of the peculiarities of any other 2. It must concede to every denomination the right to retain its own organization for government, discipline, and worship. 3. It must not prevent the discussion of the points of difference between the several associated denominations, but only require that it be done in the spirit of love. 4. It must either in all or at least some of its features be applicable to all evangelical, fundamentally orthodox [non-Unitarian] churches, and each denomination may at option adopt any or all of its features." (12 ) The plan of union offered in accordance with these principles by Schmucker and the committee embraces the following features: 1. Adoption of the nine doctrinal articles of the Evangelical Alliance. 2. Regular interchange of delegates between the supreme judicatories of the several denominations. 3. Cooperation of the different associated churches in voluntary societies, notably such as Bible, Tract, Sabbath-school and Foreign Mission Societies. 4. The more extensive use of the Bible as a text-book in theological, congregational, and Sunday-school institutions. 5. Occasional free sacramental communion by all whose views of duty allow it. 6. A general, stated anniver-

sary celebration and smaller state celebrations, also representation at the ecumenical conventions of the Evangelical Alliance (12.) The report concludes: "This plan was sent by your committee in the form of a proof-sheet to about fifty of the most distinguished and influential divines of ten different denominations, and these not only returned letters expressing their substantial approbation of the plan, but nearly all of them united with your committee in sending it out over their own signatures as an overture of Christian union, submitted for the consideration of the Evangelical denominations in the United States." (13.)

**39. Endorsed by the General Synod.** — "According to the conception of prominent leaders," says Dr. Jacobs, "the General Synod was nothing more than the realization of Zinzendorf's dream of 1742, which the coming of Muhlenberg had so quickly dissipated" (*History*, 364.) But judged by its minutes, what Jacobs limits to its "prominent leaders" is true of the General Synod as such. Synod certainly did not discourage Schmucker in his union schemes. In 1839, at Chambersburg, the General Synod was immediately interested in his "Plan of Apostolic Protestant Union." The committee appointed in the matter recommended "that Synod approve of the several features of the union plan, and submit it for serious consideration to its District Synods." (19.) A following convention appointed Schmucker, Krauth, and Miller as a Committee of Conference on Christian Union to confer with similar committees and prominent individuals of different denominations "on the great subject of Christian Union." At New York, 1848, Synod resolved that the report on Christian Union be adopted, and the Committee on Christian Union be continued." (15.) At Charleston, 1850, the Committee of Conference remarked in its report: "As the general principles of the Apostolic Christian Union, *adopted by this body*, were fully detailed in our last report, it is deemed unnecessary to enlarge on them in this place." (21.) Schmucker continued his efforts till the year of his death, 1873, when again he made an appeal to the General Synod "for an advisory union among all Evangelical denominations" as an "additional aid to the promotion of the designs of the World's Evangelical Alliance." (53.) The committee to

whom Schmucker's letter and his printed appeal was referred, recommended the resolution: "Resolved, That while this General Synod approves of the ends contemplated by the appeal, and commends the fraternal spirit of its author, yet it does not deem it necessary for the present to take any further action towards Christian union than that which is already upon record." (53) Schmucker's ideas concerning Christian union, however, were not abandoned by the General Synod. Moreover, in a way, his plans materialized in the Federal Council, consisting of about 30 Protestant bodies, at the organization of which, in 1905, the General Synod was represented by Wenner, Remensnyder, Grosscup, and Bauslin (*L. u. W.* 1906, 33.) Theologically the Federal Council does not even measure up to the ideals of Schmucker, inasmuch as it reduced the nine points of the Evangelical Alliance, which Schmucker viewed as essential, to the meager confession of "Jesus Christ as their divine Lord and Savior," which even Unitarians will not hesitate to subscribe to. Besides, Seventh-day Adventists, Christians, Friends, and other bodies tainted with Unitarianism are even now connected with the Federal Council. In 1909 the General Synod "heartily endorsed the work of the Federal Council." (115.) In 1917 Synod adopted the report of its delegates to the Council which said, in part: "It was a great privilege to have participated in this historic council. As the federation idea originated in the United States in the mind and heart of a learned and devout Lutheran, Dr. Samuel S. Schmucker, it was a great joy and satisfaction to see and participate in this consummation of Dr. Schmucker's hope of all Protestant bodies in council and cooperation in the one common task of propagating the kingdom of God in society and throughout the world." (27.) The ultimate aim of the Federal Council evidently is an amalgamation of all Protestant Churches. And there are, even now, General Synodists who are ready to countenance this eventuality. In the *Christian Herald*, December 12, 1917, Dr J. B. Remensnyder spoke of the essential unity of Protestantism separated only by minor differences, and of "the practical possibility of a larger union, — one world-wide Protestant Church of Christ," to be brought about by mutual surrender of secondary differences. "It will not come about," says Remensnyder, "by one denomination in-

sisting absolutely on its doctrinal type" In the *Lutheran Church Work and Observer*, May 23, 1918, p. 7 f, a General Synod pastor wrote: "With forms of religion and denominational differences we have nothing to do . . . Let each one have his own faith, his own light and hope." "There come moments when we forget our differences and our various labels, when we arise above the partial, the individual, and sectarian, when a common impulse drives us headlong into the arms of trust and general comradeship . . ."

### THEOLOGY REFORMED.

40. **Championing Reformed Doctrines.** — Wherever Lutherans unite with the Reformed, the former gradually sink to the level of the latter. Already by declaring the differences between the two Churches irrelevant, the Lutheran truths are actually sacrificed and denied. Unionism always breaks the backbone, and outrages the conscience, of true Lutheranism. And naturally enough, the refusal to confess the Lutheran truth is but too frequently followed by eager endorsement and fanatical defense of the opposite errors. This is fully borne out by the history of the General Synod. As the years rolled on, the Reformed lineaments, at first manifesting themselves in unionism, came out in ever bolder relief. The distinctive Lutheran doctrines of the Lord's Supper, the person of Christ, Baptism, absolution, infant faith, the means of grace, the Sabbath, abstinence, separation of State and Church, etc., were all rejected and assailed by the most prominent leaders of the General Synod. And the unionistic spirit, with which also the most conservative within the General Synod were infected, paralyzed the courage of the men who, in a measure, saw and loved the light, and should have been bold in confessing the truth and uncompromising in defending it against the opposite errors. In 1831, in deference to sectarianism, the publication of the *Lutheran Observer* was transferred to Baltimore, with Dr. Morris as editor, because it was feared that the Presbyterians might take offense at the title "Lutheran" if, as was originally planned, it was published at Gettysburg with the professors as editors! It was in the interest of eliminating the specific Lutheran doctrines that, in 1845, at Philadelphia,

a committee (Schmucker, Morris, Schmidt, Pohlman, Kurtz) was appointed to formulate and present to the next convention an abstract of the doctrines and usages of the American Lutheran Church, on the order of the Abstract requested in 1844 by the Maryland Synod, in which the Lutheran doctrine of the Real Presence was rejected. The report was made at Charleston, S. C., 1850, but "laid on the table, and the committee discharged from further duty." (27.) In 1855 a bold effort was made to abandon the Augsburg Confession in favor of the notorious Definite Platform, from which all specifically Lutheran doctrines had been eliminated in order to open the way officially for the tenets peculiar to Reformed theology. Some of the fanatics were not even willing to tolerate Lutheran doctrine in the General Synod. When in 1852 the Pennsylvania Synod resolved to reunite with the General Synod, and called upon all Lutherans in America to follow her example, the *Observer*, December 21, 1852, published a declaration stating that the Augsburg Confession taught the real presence of the body and blood of Christ in the Lord's Supper and several other things, which were rejected by almost all of the friends and promoters of the General Synod, and that it was sinful to unite with Lutherans who adhered to such doctrines. (*Lutheraner*, Dec 21, 1852.) Former members of the North Illinois Synod declared in the *Observer* of January 20, 1860: "We do not believe in the bodily presence, baptismal regeneration, the ceremonies of the mass, and in similar nonsense." (*L. u. W.* 1860, 93.) As late as 1896 the Allegheny Synod refused to ordain a candidate because he did not hold that the Sunday was of divine institution. (*L. u. W.* 1896, 281.)

41. *Sailing under False Colors.* — Foremost and boldest among the Reformed theologians within the General Synod were S. S. Schmucker and B. Kurtz, who nevertheless insisted on sailing under the Lutheran flag. Brazenly claiming to be the true representatives of Lutheranism, they at the same time assailed the Lutheran and defended the Reformed doctrines with ultra Calvinistic zeal and bigotry. They opposed the adoption of all the Lutheran symbols (especially of the Formula of Concord), as well as the unqualified subscription to the Augsburg Confession, because they were imbued with the

Reformed spirit and absolute strangers to, and enemies of, everything distinctive of, and essential to, true Lutheranism. (*L. u. W.* 1866, 21.) In his *Popular Theology*, published for the first time in 1834, Schmucker says: "But whilst the Reformers [Luther and Zwingli] agreed in rejecting this papal error [transubstantiation], it is much to be regretted that they could neither harmonize among themselves as to what should be substituted in its stead, nor consent to walk together in love, when they could not entirely accord in opinion. . . . Alas! that men, distinguished so highly for intellect, and chosen of God to accomplish so great a work, should betray such a glaring want of liberality toward each other; that, having gloriously co-operated in vanquishing the papal beast, they should turn their weapons against each other, for a point not decided in Scripture, and therefore of minor importance!" (Edition 1848, p 297.) With respect to the presence of Christ in the Lord's Supper, Schmucker, in his *Popular Theology*, distinguishes between the substantial, the influential, and the symbolical presence and the bald symbolical representation. Then he continues: "After a protracted and unprofitable struggle, the Lutheran Church has long since settled down in the happy conviction that on this, as on all other subjects not clearly determined by the inspired Volume, her sons shall be left to follow the dictates of their own conscience, having none to molest them or make them afraid In the Lutheran Church in this country each of the above views has some advocates, though the great body of our divines, if we mistake not, embraces either the second or third." (305.) Also in his *Portraiture of Lutheranism* (1840) Schmucker maintained that the Lutheran Church no longer demands the acknowledgment of the real presence in the Eucharist, Luther himself, toward the end of his life, having admitted that he had gone too far in this matter.

**42. Moses Stuart's Declaration.** — Referring to the statements quoted from Schmucker's *Popular Theology*, Prof. Moses Stuart of Andover said in the *Bibliotheca Sacra* of 1844: "I should not do justice to the Lutheran Church of recent times if I did not say that many within its precincts have loudly called in question the old doctrine of Luther and his

compeers and successors in respect to consubstantiation [real presence] The battle has been fought of late with great power; and scarcely a doubt remains that the more enlightened of the Lutherans are either renouncing his views, or coming to the position that they are not worth contending for in this country such is clearly the case. Dr. S. S. Schmucker, the able and excellent exponent of the Lutheran theology in this country, in his work, called *Popular Theology*, has told us that they are 'settled down in the happy conviction that on this, and on all other subjects not clearly determined by the inspired Volume, her sons shall be left to follow the dictates of their own conscience, having none to molest or make them afraid.' The great body of Lutheran divines among us, according to the same writer, doubt or deny the corporeal or physical presence of Christ in the elements of the Eucharist. It is not difficult to predict that ere long the great mass of well-informed Lutherans, at least in this country, will be substantially united, in regard to this subject, with the other Reformed Churches" (Spaeth, *C. P. Krauth*, 1, 115 )

43. Reformed Attitude of the "Observer." — Commenting on B. Kurtz, editor of the *Lutheran Observer*, Dr. Spaeth says: "For years and years he was indefatigable in his coarse and irreverential, yea, blasphemous attacks upon what was set forth as most sacred in the Confessions of the Lutheran Church. The loyal adherents of the historical faith of the Augsburg Confession were denounced as 'resurrectionists of elemental, undeveloped, halting, stumbling, and staggering humanity,' as priests ready 'to immolate bright meridian splendor on the altar of misty, musky dust,' men bent on going backward, and consequently, of necessity, going downward!" Every distinctive doctrine and usage of Lutheranism was ridiculed and assailed, in the *Lutheran Observer*, by Kurtz and his theological affinities. In its issue of June 29, 1849, C. P. Krauth, in an article on the question of Christ's presence in the Eucharist, wrote: "From this high position [of the Lutheran confessions, held by some Lutherans in America] there are almost all shades of dissent and descent, not only to that which is popularly called the Zwinglian, and of which the *Lutheran Observer* may be considered the exponent, but yet lower to that which

we may call, for want of a better name, Socinian" (Spaeth 1, 162.) A few weeks prior (June 8) Kurtz had declared that in the 60 Lutheran congregations in Maryland not 30 American-born members could be found who knew what "bodily presence" in the Lord's Supper meant, much less believed in it. The more the free-thinking, practical, and common-sense people of the United States got acquainted with this doctrine, the less they would take to it. The same was true of other obsolete doctrines, such as baptismal regeneration. (*Lutheraner*, October 30, 1849) In January of 1854 the *Observer* announced that an old manuscript had been discovered in Germany, according to which Luther, shortly before his death, retracted his controversy against the Sacramentarians. (*Lutheraner* 10, 108; cf. 2, 47.) In November of the same year the *Observer* declared that Profs Heppe and Ebrard had proved that the doctrine of the Lutheran Church on the Lord's Supper was not the one of Luther, but that of the later Melancthon. (*Lutheraner* 11, 71.) Anspach, coeditor of the *Observer*, stated in its number of November 12, 1858: "Difference of opinion concerning the Sacraments is tolerated in the General Synod, and although there are some among our brethren who believe in the real presence of our Savior in the Lord's Supper in a higher sense than others, they nevertheless hold that this takes place in a spiritual and supernatural manner." (*L. u. W.* 1859, 30.) In its issue of June 29, 1860, the *Observer* protested: "We can never subscribe to the errors of the Augsburg Confession . . . Let a separation take place. Let those who are able to swallow the errors of the sixteenth century, which have long ago been hissed from the stage, rally around the banner: 'The true body and the true blood of Christ in a natural manner in the elements,' and on the back side: 'Regeneration by Baptism and priestly absolution essential to true Lutheranism'! This is the theology of the symbolists. This papistical theology we cannot and will not subscribe to in America. For it is a theology which is not drawn from the Bible, but from the Roman Bible." In 1861 the *Observer* remarked that the Missouri, Buffalo, and other Old Lutherans practise ceremonies and adhere to doctrines which are as odious to many of us as those in vogue in the Roman Church. (March 8.) Two years prior the *Observer* had blasphemously scoffed at the Lutheran Communion Liturgy

as "altar antics" (*L. u. W.* 1860, 31.) *Observer*, February 12, 1864. "Christ is at the right hand of God in heaven. How, then, can we speak of Christ's body and blood as present in the Sacrament since no such body did exist for these 1800 years, never since His ascension into glory?" (*L. u. W.* 1864, 125.) November 7, 1862: "But who exercises faith in infant baptism? Not the child, but the father or the sponsor," etc. (*L. u. W.* 1862, 373 ) In 1904 the *Observer* denied that a child believes and is regenerated by Baptism. (*L. u. W.* 1904, 471 ) According to the *Observer* of 1901 a man may become a true Christian even without any knowledge of the Gospel and of Christ. (*L. u. W.* 1901, 306.) *Observer*, March 27, 1868: "God's Book is a total abstinence book, and God's Son never made intoxicating wine" In 1867 the *American Lutheran* (published by the Hartwick Synod and later merged with the *Lutheran Observer*), teaching the baldest Zwinglianism, maintained that Baptism is a mere sign and seal of membership in the visible Church on earth and no more regeneration itself than the sign-board "Hotel" is itself the hotel. (*L. u. W.* 1867, 125 ) The *Lutheran Evangelist*, merged in 1909 into the *Observer* and always disowning every doctrine distinctive of Lutheranism, stated January 20, 1899: The pastors of the General Synod are too sensible to believe "so foolish a dogma as infant faith." (*L. u. W.* 1899, 27 ) The same paper had declared in 1892: "They are bad Lutherans who do not view the Sabbath as commanded by God. If the Augsburg Confession had been written in our day, it would have delivered no uncertain testimony with respect to the divine obligation of the Day of the Lord." The *Lutheran Church Work and Observer*, the official organ of the General Synod, wrote September 12, 1918: "The General Synod has always stood on the side of temperance . . . Almost all her ministers have been abstainers and advocates of total abstinence. They have ever aligned themselves with the temperance forces of the country to put the American saloon out of business." The first resolution in favor of the temperance cause, referred to in the minutes of the General Synod, was adopted in 1831 by the Hartwick Synod (9.)

**44. General Synod Involved as Such.** — In spite of its non-committal policy as to doctrine, the General Synod also as

such has not been able to conceal its distinctively Reformed complexion. The letter of 1845 admits and approves of the fact that Luther's doctrine of the bodily presence of the Lord's Supper had long ago been abandoned by the great majority of the ministers of the General Synod. It was the Reformed theology, taught in the books of Schmucker, in the books of Kurtz, in the *Observer* edited by Kurtz, and in the *Hirtenstimme*, published by Weyl, against which Wyneken protested in 1845, at Philadelphia. But his appeal for true Lutheranism over against Reformedism impressed the General Synod merely as funny (spasshaft), and his motion in the matter was tabled. Wyneken was compelled to sever his connection with a body whose every prominent feature was Reformed. The confessional Resolution adopted 1864 at York rejects, as will be explained later, the Lutheran doctrines of the real presence, absolution, and the Sunday. The minutes of the General Synod contain frequent resolutions in favor of the sectarian views of the Sabbath, total abstinence, the introduction of the Bible into the State schools, etc. At New York, 1848, Synod declared "that we heartily approve of the 'New York City Temperance Society, organized on Christian principles,' and believe it to be the only system of operation that will be ultimately successful and triumphant; that we commend this Society to the attention of the Synods in connection with this body, and to our churches generally, and urge them to prosecute this great and philanthropic enterprise upon the Christian principles adopted by this Society." (8.) At Harrisburg, 1885, the resolutions were adopted "that we do hereby declare our belief in the divine authority of the Christian Sabbath as a day of sacred rest and religious instruction and worship of Almighty God; that we recommend to the respective Synods of the General Synod that they take such action from time to time as shall lead to more frequent and earnest appeals from all the pulpits of our Church upon this all-important subject; that with uplifted hands to that God who is the Father of us all we unceasingly implore that the day be hastened when all the earth shall be freed from the power of sin, and when life shall be one universal Sabbath to the ends of the earth." (69.) (*Proceedings* 1848, 44; 1853, 28; 1864, 45; 1883, 46; 1887, 61; etc.) In 1854 T. N. Kurtz of Baltimore published a "Lutheran Almanac," featuring

on its title-page the pictures of Luther, Zwingli, and Calvin as "those great Reformers," and listing as "great theologians of the Lutheran Church" also the names of Herder, Paulus, Ammon, Bretschneider, Wegscheider, Gesenius, Roehr, etc (*Lutheraner* 10, 15 ) This is a true-to-life picture of the General Synod in her palmyest days — Zwinglianism, Methodism, Rationalism being the most protruding features. (4, 198.)

45. Verdict of Contemporaries. — In his pamphlet *The Distress of the German Lutherans in America*, Wyneken said with special reference to the English part of the General Synod: "They have totally fallen away from the faith of the fathers. Though enthusiastic over the name 'Lutheran' and zealous in spreading the so-called 'Lutheran' Church, they, in a most shameful and foolhardy manner, attack the doctrines of our Church and seek to spread their errors in sermons, periodicals, and newspapers, notably the doctrines of Baptism and the Lord's Supper and the connected important doctrines of grace, of the two natures in Christ, etc. . . . Besides, they are ardent advocates of 'new measures' and altogether Methodist in their method of conversion." In 1845, after severing his connection with the General Synod on account of its refusal to renounce the Reformed doctrines and usages advocated by Schmucker, Kurtz, and Weyl, Wyneken denounced the General Synod as "Reformed in doctrine, Methodist in practise, and laboring for the ruin of the Church, whose name she falsely bears." (*Lutheraner* 1845, 96.) In a letter to Walther, dated December 11, 1844, Dr. Sihler wrote: "Our main enemies here in Ohio are not only the Methodists, but also the false brethren, the so-called General Synod, which, as generally known, is decidedly Reformed in the doctrine of the Sacraments, and in its practise decidedly Methodist." Again, in 1858, Sihler branded Kurtz, Schmucker, and others as "open counterfeiters, Calvinists, Methodists, Unionists, and traitors and destroyers of the Lutheran Church." (*L. u. W.* 1858, 137 ) The *Lutheran Standard*, October 27, 1847, declared: "History has already recorded it for posterity that the General Synod is not an Evangelical Lutheran body, inasmuch as it fails to adhere to just those doctrines by which the Evangelical Lutheran Church differs from other denominations. History declares that the

General Synod has expressly and without disguise renounced the distinctive doctrines of Lutheranism, and at the same time declared herself in favor of Union and Methodistic practise" (*Lutheraner* 2, 56; 4, 46.) The *Evangelical Lutheran*, published at Springfield, O., remarked that Schmucker and his compeers were engaged in selling Reformed goods under the trademark of Lutheranism. (April 9, 1868.) Dr Mann, who himself for many years had intimate connections with Philip Schaff, wrote in the *Lutherische Zeitschrift* of November 17, 1866. "It is the peculiarity of the un-Lutheran party [of the General Synod] that it is essentially committed to Reformed sentiments Dr. Schmucker has long ago openly confessed views which are in open conflict with the doctrines of the Lutheran symbols, but harmonize with those of the Reformed confessions, especially of the Zwinglian type In this sense many of his publications are written, and in this sense he has taught for many, many years in a Lutheran seminary. He is inspired by a Zwinglian-Reformed spirit, and has endeavored to imbue his scholars with it. It has never dawned on him and them what is properly the Lutheran view of Christianity. He himself has not the least sympathy for it" (Spaeth, *A. Mann*, 189 f.) In 1873 the *Lutheran Visitor* in the South charged the General Synod with fostering disloyalty to, and causing defections from, the Lutheran Church by destroying the peculiarly distinctive marks of Lutheranism (*L. u. W.* 1873, 94.)

### REVIVALISM.

46. "Justification by Sensation." — According to the Bible and the Lutheran Church the divine measures for converting sinners are the preaching of the pure Gospel and the administering of the unadulterated Sacraments. "New-measurism," then, as the very term indicates, is a human makeshift. Indeed, the Lutheran Church approves of all methods, also new measures, which merely serve to bring the divine means of grace into motion and men in contact with them. But it condemns all methods and measures, new or old, which hinder or corrupt or eliminate the divine means of grace. The new measures introduced by revivalism, however, are just such corruptions of, and substitutes for, the divine means of

grace. "Faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God" — of this truth New-measurism is a denial *in toto*. New-measurism denies the Gospel-truth that God is already reconciled and has already pardoned sinners. It denies that this pardon is freely offered in the unconditional promises of God's Word and in the Sacraments, the seals of grace. It denies that justifying and saving faith is the mere trust in these promises of God. It denies that faith in these promises alone engenders divine assurance of pardon. It mistakes, as C. P. Krauth put it, justification by sensation for justification by faith. (Spaeth 2, 35) It holds that one cannot be assured of grace without certain peculiar sensations, emotions, and feelings in his heart. It denies that faith is purely a gift of God, and teaches that man must cooperate in his own conversion. It insists that special measures must be resorted to in order to frighten men into doing their share of conversion, and to produce the emotional and neurotic conditions which warrant assurance of grace. As such measures it prescribes emotional appeals, shrieking and shouting in preaching and praying, special prayer-meetings, the anxious bench, protracted meetings, camp-meetings, etc. Revivalism brands men as spiritually dead and unconverted who, like Walther and Wyneken, base their assurance of grace, not on alleged feelings and spiritual experiences, but on the clear and unmistakable promises of God in His Word and Sacraments. New-measurism condemns and ridicules the old methods of catechetical instruction, doctrinal preaching, and of administering the Sacraments as spiritually ineffective and productive merely of head Christianity and dead orthodoxy. "Jist git the spirit started," said a Methodist to C. P. Krauth, "and then it works like smoke." "Very much like smoke, I guess," answered Krauth. (1, 67.) Indeed, Pelagianists, who believe that conversion is a mere outward moral improvement, effected by man's own free will; Romanists, who teach that man can and must by his own efforts and works earn the grace of God; Arminians and Synergists, who believe in man's ability to cooperate in his own conversion and salvation; Calvinists, who, denying universal grace, base their assurance on special marks of grace in their own hearts and lives; Reformedists and enthusiasts, who deny that Word and Sacraments are the only means of grace, collative as well as

operative, Pietists, who insist that the terrors of conscience must be of a peculiar nature and degree, and that faith must be accompanied by a happiness and a sanctification of a special kind and measure before a sinner may fully be assured of his pardon and conversion,—they all may be, and, in fact, naturally are, in sympathy with one or the other form of New-measurism and revivalism; but Lutherans, who believe in a Gospel of real pardon and power—never. If the Lutheran doctrine of grace and the means of grace is Scriptural, then the work-nerve-and-emotion Christianity of New-measurism is wrong, and *vice versa*. Not Lutheranism, but Arminianism, Enthusiasm, and Reformedism are the premises of revivalism. The fact that New-measurism was enthusiastically hailed, defended, and extensively introduced by her leading men, is but a further proof that the spirit then rampant in the General Synod was not the spirit of Lutheranism.

47. Lutherans Vying with the Fanatics. — The pietism and unionism of Muhlenberg and his colaborers was the door through which, in the days of Wesley and Whitefield, revivalism had found an early, though limited, entrance into the Lutheran Church. And in the course of its history the General Synod was zealous in cultivating and developing the evil inheritance of their fathers. It sounds like a warning against the threatening contagion when D. F. Schaeffer, in the Pastoral Letter of 1831, admonishes: "Let us faithfully adhere to the Word of God and follow its precepts unswervingly; let us not follow after those whose enthusiastic behavior is more apt to promote disorder and confusion than true edification. Against such we would warn in a most friendly manner, even if they be never so beloved. As Lutherans we admonish you: 'Be ye therefore followers of God, as dear children; and walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us, and hath given Himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet-smelling savor.'" (25) But the General Synod herself had already opened the door for, and encouraged, the movement. According to Chapter XVI of the constitution adopted 1829 for the District Synods, the annual Special Conferences were to meet for two days, especially in order "by practical preaching to awaken and convert sinners and to edify believers." (41.) In

the following year the Hartwick Synod was organized, in order more fully to satisfy the craving of their members for revivals. At the convention of the General Synod at Frederick, 1831, a committee reported that the Hartwick Synod, having unanimously voted to join the General Synod, was divided into two conferences which were to meet as often as possible, and whose chief business it was "by earnest and practical sermons to awaken and convert sinners, and to encourage and edify Christians." (9) At Baltimore, 1833, the Ohio Synod was censured for certain utterances against the "new measures" adopted within the General Synod. Finding revivalism in the Hartwick Synod not advanced enough, a few of its members, in 1837, organized the Franckean Synod, in order to press "new measures" to the extreme. On the Hartwick Synod the withdrawal acted as an impulse for a greater activity in the same direction. At Chambersburg, 1839, a committee reported on the meeting of this synod held in 1838: "We take particular pleasure in remarking that the proceedings of this Synod, especially the statements contained in the annual address of its President, afford the most satisfactory evidence that this Synod is decidedly in favor of revivals of religion. Protracted meetings have been held in various parts, and the Lord has especially blessed them; from which we have reason to believe that true and undefiled religion is more and more abounding within its limits. All the religious operations of the day, such as Tract Societies, Temperance Societies, etc., etc., enjoy the hearty support of this Synod." (13.) The minutes of the General Synod, of the District Synods, the *Lutheran Observer*, etc., soon began to teem with reports on revivals, visitations, outpourings, refreshing showers, etc (*L. u. W.* 1857, 27.) At the convention of the Maryland Synod in Frederick, 1842, Harkey proposed the publication of the *Revivalist*, a monthly to be devoted to the history and defense of revivals, revival intelligence, the best measures and means of promoting and managing revivals—a plan which Synod declined as "inexpedient." At the same convention B. Kurtz, the advocate of the wildest revivalism, succeeded in having a committee appointed to draft a minute expressive of the views of Synod in regard to "new measures." The report was discussed for two days, when it was referred back to the committee, and at the next meeting of

Synod the committee was excused from further consideration of the subject. (Spaeth 1, 111.) As late as 1876 the *American Lutheran* declared that the great majority of the pastors and congregations of the General Synod favored revivals; that they managed them on the lines of those conducted by Moody and Sankey; that some of the congregations employed sectarian preachers for protracted meetings. (*L. u. W.* 1876, 182.) When, in 1877, the *American Lutheran* merged into the *Observer*, Dr. Conrad solemnly promised to continue defending revivalism (*L. u. W.* 1877, 60.) In 1908, referring to revivals still occasionally reported in the *Observer*, the *Lutherische Herold* remarked that this sort of enthusiasm, formerly the rule in the Eastern and Central States, had as yet not nearly died out, *e. g.*, in the General Synod congregations of Eastern and Central Pennsylvania. (*L. u. W.* 1908, 322.) Down to 1918 occasional revivals were held or participated in by congregations and ministers of the General Synod. Several years ago Rev. Bell cooperated in a revival conducted by Billy Sunday in Toledo, etc. According to *Church Work and Observer*, November 9, 1916, the General Synod church at Gettysburg, Pa., conducted a joint revival with Presbyterians, Methodists, and United Brethren.

48. "The Lever of Archimedes." — In the revival agitation which swept over America in the decades following 1830 practically all of the English Lutheran churches (the German churches, in part, stood aloof) caught the contagion in a malignant form and in great numbers. While even Prof. J. W. Nevin, Schaff's colleague at Mercersburg, in his book *The Anxious Bench* (1844), antagonized the extravagances of a movement which was germane to his own church, Lutherans such as Schmucker, Kurtz, Harkey, Passavant, and many others, became extremists in practising, and fanatics in advocating, "new measures" as the most needful and only effective methods of accelerating and deepening conversion and reviving the Lutheran Church. Vying in their wild extravagances with the most fanatical of the sects, Lutherans, in not a few places, condemned as spiritually dead formalists, head and memory Christians, all who adhered to the sound principles and old ways of Lutheranism. (Gerberding, *The Way*

of *Life*, 197 ff.) S. L. Harkey, himself a fiery New-measurist, describes a revival held in connection with the convention of the Synod of the West, in 1839, as follows: "In an instant every soul in the house was upon the knees, and remained there weeping and praying for mercy." "The whole congregation became more or less moved. The place became truly awful and glorious, and it seemed that the time had come when a decided effort must be made upon the kingdom of darkness, and that under such circumstances to shrink from the task and, through fear of producing a little temporary disorder, to refuse to go heartily into the work, would have been nothing short of downright spiritual murder." "At one time during the meeting it was found necessary to invite the mourners to withdraw from the church and remove to the parsonage that the synod might have an opportunity to proceed with the transaction of business before it." (Neve, 97.) Dr Kurtz wrote in the *Observer* of November 17, 1843: "The so-called 'anxious bench' is the lever of Archimedes, which by the blessing of God can raise our German churches to that degree of respectability in the religious world which they ought to enjoy." (Neve, 95.) The *Lutheran Observer* of March 21, 1862, while defending revivalism and misrepresenting the "symbolism" of the Missourians as the doctrine according to which one is saved by the Sacraments *ex opere operato*, without repentance and faith, condemns the Lutheran system of baptizing, catechizing, confirming, communing at the Lord's Supper, etc., as Romanism and sacramentalism, as unbiblical and not at all the religion of Christ and His apostles, as fundamentally wrong and utterly ineffective, and disgusting also to Lutherans, as soon as they were enlightened by the Spirit of God. The *Observer* continues: The success of Methodists, Baptists, Presbyterians, and even of the Congregationalists among the Germans is due to revivals. "The Lutheran Church in Germany and in this country is in need of religious revivals. Nothing else will save them." (*L. u. W.* 1862, 152.) In 1900, reporting numerous conversions in consequence of revivals held in congregations of the General Synod, the *Observer* remarked: "If half a dozen of our best preachers would turn evangelists — no greater blessing could come to our Church." (*L. u. W.* 1900, 179.) The *Lu-*

*theran World*, January 17, 1901: "In our own General Synod many of our churches came to look upon the Catechism as unfriendly to vital piety, and they cast it out. To-day even there are still those among us who oppose and resist the use of the Catechism under the false notion that it is the enemy of practical religion. Their idea of religion is the Methodistic notion Fitness for church-membership, according to their view, comes through the pressure and appointments of the big meeting. Sinners must come to a bench for mourning, or they must stand up in the congregation, or they must hold their hands, or they must send in their card asking for the prayers of the church. Human devices and appointments are fixed on as requisites for having a genuine conversion and being filled with the Spirit of God. This is Romanism in disguise." (*L. u. W.* 1901, 54 )

**49. Reports on Revivals.** — To what an extent over a long period revivals were indulged in by the congregations of the General Synod appears from its minutes. The Committee on the State of the Church reported in 1857: "Revivals have been enjoyed in every quarter, many souls have been added to the Lord, and whilst the congregations have thus been largely increased, there is every reason to anticipate that the addition thus secured for the ranks of the ministry will not be a small one." (30 ) In 1859: "The most extensive and powerful revivals of religion ever known among us have been enjoyed by a very large number of our churches during the past two years." (59.) In 1864: "Frequent and extensive revivals and numerous additions to the Church are reported by the brethren." (55.) In 1866: "Many of our churches are rejoicing in special seasons of grace, refreshings from on high, revivals of religion, in which sinners are converted, whilst God's people are awakening to new life." (42.) In 1869: "Revivals of religion have been quite general during the year, and many have been born into the kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ." (59.) In 1875: "In most of the synods there have been seasons of special extended quickening. Large numbers have professed conversion. In some instances hundreds have been added to a single church in a twelvemonth." (23.) In 1848 the Synod of Western Virginia reported: "Almost all our churches have been blessed with revivals of religion. In

some upwards of one hundred persons have professed to have passed from death unto life; in others seventy-five, in others fifty, and in some not so many" (45) In 1859. "The two institutions, Roanoke College and Wytheville Female College have also been blessed with gracious visitations from on high which resulted in the conversion of a number of students in both institutions." (53.) The Virginia Synod, in 1859 "We have shared to some extent the great revival blessings which God has poured out upon the land" (51.) The New York Ministerium, in 1850. "The churches generally are in a state of prosperity, and many of them have been favored with special visitations of the Holy Spirit." (31.) In 1859. "The great revival has had its influence upon our churches, many have been added to our number, and the vital piety has increased" (51) The Synod of West Pennsylvania, in 1850 "Interesting revivals of religion have occurred since the last General Synod in different places." (29.) In 1853: "The influences of the Holy Spirit have descended as the dew upon the labors of most of them, whilst there have been refreshing showers in the case of many Revivals are known to have been enjoyed by eight of the pastoral districts within the last two years This number embraces nearly half of the charges of the Synod Some of these gracious seasons were of great power resulting in the hopeful conversion of many souls, and furnishing a number of students having the ministry in view." (28.) In 1859: "Nearly all the churches have enjoyed revivals of religion more or less extensive; conversions have been numerous" (49.) In 1864. "In some pastorates there have been special awakenings, and many have been added to the Church of Christ." (55.) In 1871: "Many of the churches have been blessed with precious seasons of refreshing grace." (44) Eastern Pennsylvania Synod, in 1850. "Many sections of the Church have been blessed with special visitations of the Spirit of God." (32) In 1862 the Synod of Central Pennsylvania reported: "In mercy God poured out His Spirit upon a number of the charges and congregations, and many souls professed conversion; and although the sad effects of the war are, in this Synod, clearly seen in her churches, still we are happy to state that much good has been accomplished." (45.) In 1871 "There have been extensive awakenings in several of our pas

torates, and there is a steady and commendable progress in spiritual attainments generally." (47.) The Hartwick Synod, in 1853. "Precious seasons of refreshing have been vouchsafed to its churches The Lord is in the midst of His people, making glad their hearts with the tokens of His presence and His love." (30.) In 1862: "Although there have not been, within the past three years, revivals so numerous and so extensive as in the two years previous, yet seasons of refreshing have been enjoyed on the part of many of the churches, and such progress made as to evince the Lord's presence and blessing." (41.) In 1864: "In several of our churches the Lord has graciously revived His work, believers have been quickened into higher life, and sinners have been converted." (57.) In 1871: "Many of our congregations have enjoyed special seasons of grace, and large accessions to the Church have been the result." (44.) In 1859 the Alleghany Synod reported: "Extensive revivals have been enjoyed and a large number of members added." (52.) In 1862: "The Synod has had some precious revivals of religion in many of its congregations In many respects the Synod has prospered in vital piety." (42.) In 1869: "Some of the charges have made large additions, as results of religious awakenings, during the past winter." (58 ) The Melancthon Synod, in 1859: "Extensive revivals of religion have been enjoyed in many of the congregations, and large additions have been made to the membership." (58 ) In 1862: "The churches within the bounds of this Synod enjoyed extensive revivals during the first two years after the last meeting of the General Synod, at which time the rebellion, so disastrous to both State and Church, took place and blasted many of our most cherished enterprises, and laid low many of our fondest hopes. During the past year, accessions to the Church within our bounds have been comparatively few, revivals of religion rare, whilst there has been a marked decline in vital godliness." (46.) In 1860: "During the past year quite a number of revivals of religion have occurred." (59.) The Synod of Kentucky, in 1859: "Some of our charges have enjoyed revivals of religion, which greatly refreshed both ministers and people, and considerably increased our numerical strength." (57.) The Maryland Synod, in 1859: "Extensive revivals have been enjoyed by many of the churches." (49.) The Synod of New Jersey, in 1862: "Our

body has an existence of only one year. Yet we have enjoyed revivals of religion." (42.) In 1869: "A number of revival of religion have been reported." (61) In 1871: "Several of our churches have enjoyed seasons of special religious interest and revival." (48) The Franckean Synod, in 1869: "Practical religion has been well sustained. Several precious revivals have been enjoyed." (62) In 1871: "Synod is engaged with more or less success in establishing and unfolding a true religious life in the membership of the Church of God as the grand object of being, endeavoring to promote revivals of religion." (48) The Susquehanna Synod, in 1869: "This Synod is in a prosperous condition. During the past year, and, more particularly, during the past winter, extensive revivals of religion were enjoyed and large numbers of souls hopefully converted to God and added to the Church." (62.) In 1871: "There has been a large increase in the membership, mostly through judiciously conducted protracted meetings and catechization" (48.)

**50. Reports on Revivals (continued).** — In 1869 the Synod of New York reported: "Some of the congregations have been visited with special showers of divine grace, and as a consequence, large additions have been made to its membership." (58.) The English Synod of Ohio, in 1853: "There are but few congregations in connection with our Synod but what have, during the past year, enjoyed greater or less manifestations of the Spirit of God in the conversion of sinners." (34.) The East Ohio Synod, in 1859: "In all of our churches most precious seasons of grace were enjoyed. The Spirit of God 'came down like rain upon the mown grass,' and righteousness flourished in all our borders." (52.) In 1862: "The state of religion is healthy. The past few years have been marked with the gifts of the Divine Spirit, and, while sinners have been converted to God, the professed people of Christ have been steadily growing in spirituality and church love." (43.) In 1869: "We have had many precious seasons of revival during the past year, and large accessions to the number of those who shall be saved" (59.) In 1871: "Many precious revivals of religion have been recorded, and large accessions have been made to the churches." (45.) The Oliv

Branch Synod, in 1853: "Almost all the churches connected with this Synod, during the year, enjoyed precious revivals of religion." (37.) In 1859: "Many of them have enjoyed refreshing seasons from the presence of the Lord, by which they have become much strengthened and encouraged" (54.) In 1862: "The churches are, with few exceptions, in a prosperous condition. Some of them have enjoyed seasons of refreshing." (43.) In 1871: "A number of charges have had precious seasons of revival, resulting in large additions to their membership. The state of religion in our churches is more favorable than it had been in the few years previous." (46 ) The Miami Synod, in 1859: "Revivals have been enjoyed in almost every charge, and large numbers have been brought to the knowledge of the truth." (52.) In 1871: "Several of them have enjoyed special seasons of grace." (45.) The Synod of Iowa, in 1859: "Some of the churches have been visited by revivals of religion, and there a more healthful state of piety is seen." (58.) In 1862: "The most extensive revivals of religion ever known among us have been enjoyed during the past winter. Our laity are becoming more of a praying as well as a working people. A deeper tone of piety exists among us. There is more heartfelt and prayerful longing for the gracious outpouring of the blessing of God, and more earnest efforts are being put forth for the conversion and salvation of souls. It is therefore our decided conviction that at no former period of our brief history have we been so fully and generally awakened to our great mission in this distant West as at the present." (46.) The Synod of Northern Illinois, in 1859: "Our Swedish and Norwegian brethren are very active, and a living practical Christianity is making powerful progress among them. During the last two years extensive and powerful revivals have been enjoyed by many of the churches connected with this Synod." (54.) In 1871: "A number of refreshing seasons of divine grace has been enjoyed during the past two years." (47.) The Synod of Northern Indiana, in 1859: "In the last two years many of its churches have enjoyed revivals of religion." (57.) In 1862: "Many precious revivals of religion have been enjoyed." (44.) The Wittenberg Synod, in 1859: "During the past two years our churches have enjoyed the special visitations of the Holy Spirit and the number of our

members has been greatly enlarged" (52.) The Synod of Illinois, in 1859: "Many of the churches have enjoyed refreshing seasons from the presence of the Lord, and vital piety is advancing." (53.) The Synod of Southern Illinois, in 1862: "Some of our congregations have enjoyed refreshing showers from the presence of the Lord, during the last winter, and are in prosperous condition." (46.) In 1864: "Amid all these hindrances, some of the churches have been revived by gracious outpourings of the Spirit." (59.) In 1869: "Although new elements of wickedness, such as rationalism, pantheism, etc., are making their way into our midst, yet Christians are awake to their baneful influences and are setting themselves against them." (61.)

51. Coming to Their Senses Gradually. — New-measurism was resorted to by the General Synod in order to revive the dying Church. The true cause of her apathy, atrophy, and decay, however, was not diagnosed correctly. It was the prevailing confessional indifference, religious ignorance, and the neglect of Lutheran indoctrination by catechization, especially of the young. Dr. Hazelius, himself a revivalist, as early as 1845, pointed out the real cause and cure. "The attachment of the Church" — said he — "has been weakened so much that the causes of this alarming fact have frequently been made the subject of inquiry in our church-paper [*Observer*], and we are sorry to say that among all the causes assigned, we have missed the one which is at the root of the evil, *viz.*, the remissness of many of our pastors in the religious instruction of youths." (Wolf, *Lutherans in America*, p. 484.) If this was the disease, it stands to reason that a cure could not be brought about by the quack methods of New-measurism, by exciting the nerves and emotions, but only by enlightening the mind and moving the will by the Word of God. Pastor Loehe, presenting in *Kirchliche Mittheilungen* of 1843 a description of revivals and camp-meetings in America, remarked: "They intoxicate themselves with spiritual drinks which are worse than whisky." (Nos. 2 and 5.) Indeed, Methodist revivalism has been found wanting, and worse than wanting, everywhere. In a Lutheran congregation it must necessarily result in a total annihilation of whatever there may be left of true Lutheranism. — The in-

operativeness of revivalism was occasionally admitted also by its friends within the General Synod. At New York, 1848, regretting the decrease in the number of theological students, the Executive Committee of the Parent Education Society stated: "This subject becomes more painful when we consider that since 1842, when the Church at large was blessed with extensive revivals of religion, the number of beneficiaries has diminished constantly until the present time, whilst there has been no corresponding increase perceptible in the number of theological students who sustain themselves. During the same time there has been no corresponding increase in the benevolence of the Church in any other direction; on the contrary, the contributions of the whole Church for all benevolent purposes may now be easily covered by the annual charities of a single congregation in this city" (64). But the ministers and congregations of the General Synod were slow in coming to their senses. It was one of the symptoms pointing in the right direction when, in 1864 at York, the Committee on the State of the Church reported: "It is a hopeful sign of substantial growth and prosperity in the Church that the time-honored custom of catechization is coming more and more into favor with the pastors. This means of preparing the baptized children of the Church for an intelligent profession of faith in Christ and the privilege of communicant membership, had, in many places, fallen into neglect on account of the frequent abuse to which it had been subject in the hands of those who employed it as a mere formal mode of introducing the young to the communion without any evidence of piety; but we believe it is now becoming more and more a means of conversion and salvation to our rising membership." (1864, 55.) At Altona, 1881, the same committee presented the following report, which Synod adopted: "Ministers, from every quarter, report with delight that catechization is regularly practised and grows in favor. We are foolish to throw away this noble heritage. It affords, as nothing else, an opportunity for the children of the Church to become professing Christians. The pastor can train, educate, and indoctrinate them through it. By its help our churches, every year, can have a healthful growth, and not depend alone upon special seasons, or revivals of religion. We, therefore, may expect in the future still larger accessions —

accessions which, trained by a godly and devoted ministry, should be, not nominal, but living Christians, understanding the great truths and doctrines of the Word of God" (60.) In the following decades, as related, revivals decreased rapidly within the General Synod. A thorough and permanent cure of the Methodistic infection, however, can be effected only by the doctrine of grace, the Gospel of unconditional pardon and truly divine power, as taught by the Lutheran Church.

### "AMERICAN LUTHERANISM."

52. **A Misnomer.** — Essentially Americanism signifies liberty of thought, speech, press, and assemblage, based on democracy and national independence, religious freedom and equality being its most precious gem. Lutheranism, therefore, standing, as it does, for the complete separation of State and Church, as well as liberty and equal religious rights for all, is inherently American; while the Reformed confessions, inasmuch as they advocate religious intolerance, civil legislation favoring their own religious tenets, etc., are in conflict with the principles of American freedom. A Reformedist, in order to become a true American, must sacrifice some of his confessional teachings, while the Lutheran symbols are in need of no purging to bring them into harmony with American ideals. Indeed, in the atmosphere of American liberty the Lutheran Church, for the first time in her history, on a large scale was able to develop naturally and normally by consistent practical application of her own innate principles, without any corrupting or dwarfing coercion on the part of the State whatsoever. Yet the very man, Dr. Walther, who did more than any other theologian in America towards the building up of a Church at once truly Lutheran and truly American, was stigmatized by S. S. Schmucker and his compeers as a "foreign symbolist," neither Lutheran nor American. But the brand of American Lutheranism proposed and propagated by the leaders of the General Synod was, in reality, a counterfeit American Lutheranism. The new school movement, headed by Schmucker, Kurtz, and Sprecher, and constantly prating "American Lutheranism," was essentially Calvinistic, Methodistic, Puritanic, indifferentistic, and unionistic, hence nothing less than truly Lutheran. From

his professor's chair and in the press Schmucker denied and assailed every doctrine distinctive of Lutheranism. In every issue of the *Observer* B Kurtz ridiculed and attacked what was most sacred to Luther and most prominent in the Lutheran Confessions. In this he was seconded by Weyl in *Lutherische Hirtenstimme* and other publications in the General Synod. Thus, while professing and pretending to Americanize the Lutheran Church, the leaders of the General Synod, in reality, were zealous in denaturing, corrupting, and inoculating it with views and ways prevailing in the Reformed churches ever since the days of Zwingli, Bucer, Calvin, and Wesley. The coryphaei of the General Synod, in order to impart to the Lutheran Church, as they put it, "the warmth of Methodism and the vigor of Presbyterianism," disemboweled their own Church of heart and lungs, and filled the empty skin with sectarian stuffings. American Lutheranism, according to Schmucker, was not Lutheranism in sympathy with American institutions and the English language, but abolition of the Lutheran symbols and rejection of the Lutheran doctrines (absolution, real presence, baptismal regeneration, etc.) in favor of the corresponding Reformed tenets and the nine articles of the Evangelical Alliance. Reynolds said in a letter of January 7, 1850: "The fact is, there is a large body of men in our Church who have no knowledge of her history, no sympathy with her doctrines, no idea of her true character, and whose conception of the Church is that of a kind of mongrel Methodistic Presbyterianism, and of this party Drs. S. S. Schmucker and Kurtz are the coryphaei." (Spaeth 1, 179.) In 1873 *Lehre und Wehre* wrote: "So-called American Lutheranism is but a new edition of Zwinglianism, which, in a dishonest fashion, appropriates the Lutheran name. The more one agrees with Zwingli and disagrees with the 16th century Lutheranism, the more genuine an American Lutheran he is." (29.)

**53. Spirit of the Movement.** — The true inwardness of the "American Lutheranism" with which the General Synod was infected from its very birth, and which reached its crisis in the Definite Platform of 1855, was revealed in all its nakedness by the *American Lutheran*, a paper into which the *Lutherische Kirchenbote* of Selinsgrove, Pa., had been transformed in 1865.

Its standpoint is characterized by *Lehre und Wehre* as being beneath that of the *Observer* — “the hollowest so-called American Lutheranism, a concoction of rationalism and sentimentalism.” (1865, 61) When Prof. Sternberg, a fanatical anti-symbolist (opponent of the Lutheran Confessions), had been removed from Hartwick Seminary, the *American Lutheran*, June 22, 1865, wrote: “The days when compromises with and concessions to symbolism were made are passed. If a clash between symbolism and American Lutheranism is unavoidable within the General Synod, the sooner it comes, the better it is.” (*L. u. W.* 1865, 253.) In its issue of July 20, 1865, the *American Lutheran* published a number of letters in which the hope is expressed that the day was near when the Lutheran Church in America would shake off the yoke of symbolism and step forward, recognized by the great Protestant world. “The attempt” — the correspondent continues — “to live in one and the same house with the symbolists is useless. We thank God that we have a paper which says in its first year: No compromise any longer with symbolism! Hallelujah! May the whole Church hear it.” (*L. u. W.* 1865, 277.) Revealing both its ignorance and animus, the *American Lutheran*, Rev. Anstaedt then being the editor, said in its issue of January 24, 1867: “The difference between the symbolists [Lutherans true to their Confessions] and American Lutherans is a radical one, going down to the innermost heart of Christianity and involving eternal interests, the salvation and hope of immortal souls. The *American Lutheran* believes that religion is a personal and individual matter, while the symbolist believes that it is but a congregational matter. Their articles of faith are: 1. All men are born in sin. 2. The Church must redeem us from sin. 3. The Church consists of the priests and the Sacraments. 4. The priests have the power on earth to administer the Sacraments and to forgive sins. 5. The Sacraments have in themselves the power to save. 6. Baptism regenerates the child. 7. The Lord’s Supper nourishes the seed implanted in Baptism. 8. Hence man is not saved by the individual experience of something, but in a mass. I know that our symbolists will say that this is slander. But I affirm that it is a sincere and honest presentation of the matter. . . . The advocates of symbolism probably have never been converted, or they have backslidden

again. This is a severe judgment. So it is. But must we not judge them by their fruits? How many souls have been converted by these symbolists? Go into their congregations and speak to their members on religion; what do they know of it? In 19 out of 20 cases their members, when awakened, seek Christ in other churches. We have held back too long with our testimony. I fear that by our negligence souls have gone to hell. And what have we won by our pusillanimity? The advocates of symbolism have grown and become more impudent by their success" (*L. u. W.* 1867, 88.) In a subsequent issue the same paper, after boldly defending the baldest Zwinglian-ism, remarked with respect to the symbolists that, in a way, their success involved a certain blessing, inasmuch as they would serve as "an ecclesiastical sewer into which sooner or later the dead formalism, the cold, heartless ritualism, and the lager-beer Lutheranism of this country would find its way" (*L. u. W.* 1867, 125.) Even the *Lutheran Observer* was censured by the *American Lutheran* for becoming too conservative. (*L. u. W.* 1875, 375.) But the difference was one of degree only. In its issue of October 3, 1873, the *Observer* charged the Germans and Scandinavians, because of their adherence to the Lutheran Confessions, with sectarian presumption, enmity against other Christians, foreign bigotry, dead orthodoxy, cold dead faith, etc. "The position," the *Observer* continued, "which these bigots assume in our enlightened land of churches, where the Lord Jesus is more universally honored than in any other country of the world, is ridiculous. . . . For while these short-sighted men set themselves against the liberal and enlightened spirit of the General Synod and against the times and the country in which they live, other churches annually lead away thousands of their most intelligent members." (*L. u. W.* 1873, 375.) Enmity against Lutheranism — such was the spirit of the counterfeit American Lutheranism championed by Schmucker and his compeers. Nor is the assumption warranted that this spirit died with its early protagonists. In 1885 Dr. Butler characterized the Americanization of Lutherans in the *Lutheran Observer* as follows: "It is a great mission of the *Observer* to open the blind eyes and to convert our Teutonic people from the fetters of its language and customs to the light and to the liberty of this Bible-loving,

Sabbath-keeping, water-drinking, church-going and God-fearing country." (*L. u. W.* 1885, 120.) As late as 1906 the *Observer* wrote: The General Synod is in possession of the American spirit in the greatest measure. It is her mission to inject this spirit into the Lutheran Church in America. This spirit embraces: adoption of the English language; acknowledgment and toleration of the lodges; fellowship with the sects. "The American spirit is that of fellowship. Failure to be American in this is sure to bring us into ridicule and even disrepute with the mass of the best Christian people of the land." (*L. u. W.* 1906, 229 )

### DEFINITE PLATFORM.

54. Now or Never!—Believing that the Lutheran Confessions, though not an authority above, or alongside of, the Bible, are doctrinally in perfect agreement with the Word of God, Walther, Wyneken, Sihler, Craemer, and others, since 1840, boldly, aggressively, and victoriously unfurled the banner of Lutheran confessionalism. Gradually, though timidly and rather inconsistently, the same spirit began to enter, and manifest itself in, some of the Eastern synods. A conservative tendency was developing and increasing. Especially since the return of the Pennsylvania Ministerium in 1853 the number of the so-called conservatives in the General Synod, who refused to go all the lengths with Schmucker and Kurtz, was materially strengthened. Among these New School men the powerful growth of confessionalism in the West and the silent increase of the conservatives in the larger Eastern synods gradually began to cause alarm, fear, and consternation. They first despised and ridiculed the movement as chimerical and utterly futile in America, then feared, and finally hated and fanatically combated what they termed "foreign symbolism." They felt the fateful crisis drawing nearer and nearer. To be or not to be was the question. Nor was there any time to be lost in protecting the General Synod against what they regarded as the Western peril. "Now or never!" they whispered. Indeed, Schmucker and his friends had long ago decided that a new confessional standard was needed. As early as 1845, at Philadelphia, the General Synod had appointed Schmucker, Kurtz, Morris, Schmidt, and Pohlman to formulate and present to the

next convention an abstract of the doctrines and usages of the American Lutheran Church on the order of the Abstract requested by the Maryland Synod, in 1844. And though, in 1850, at Charleston, the report of this committee was laid on the table and the committee discharged from further duty (27), Schmucker did not abandon the idea of substituting a new "American Lutheran Creed" for the Augsburg Confession. Moreover, the conviction of the dire need of an American re-statement of Lutheranism grew on him in the same proportion as confessionalism swept the West and threatened the East. His brother-in-law, S. Sprecher, was of the same opinion. In 1853 he wrote: "I hope that this unhappy condition of the Church will not continue long, and that the churches of the General Synod will do as the churches of the Augsburg Confession did in 1580 — exercise their right to declare what they regard as doctrines of the sacred Scriptures in regard to all the points in dispute in the Church. I do not believe that the present position of the General Synod can long be maintained; it will either result in the Old-Lutheran men and synods gaining the control of the General Synod, and reintroducing those doctrines and practises of the symbols which the churches in this country and everywhere ought to abandon and condemn, *and say that they do*; or the friends of the American Lutheran Church must define what doctrines they do hold, and what they do reject, and refuse to fraternize with, and to make themselves responsible for, and to give their influence as a Church in favor of, men and doctrines and practises which they hold to be anti-Scriptural and injurious to the spiritual kingdom of Christ. I do not see how we can do otherwise than adopt the Symbols of the Church, or form a new symbol, which shall embrace all that is fundamental to Christianity in them, rejecting what is unscriptural, and supplying what is defective. *A creed we must have*, or we can have no real church union, and we must have a catechism which shall be a standard in the catechetical instruction of our children, in which there shall be no doctrines which we do not want our children to believe, and which shall, notwithstanding, be thoroughly orthodox, so that our children may be made strong in the faith of the Gospel in these times of doctrinal looseness and confusion. As long as the General Synod regards with equal favor, and is ready to receive, the

Old Lutheran as well as the American Lutheran Synods, the symbolical men have a vast advantage, and they, no doubt, regard it as a triumph when the General Synod, meeting after meeting, continues to hold out its arms to every Lutheran synod, and recommends as heartily the reviews and institutions which are laboring to upturn its present foundations, as it does those which are known to hold the sentiments which it has hitherto fostered." (Spaeth 1, 347.) Five months before the re-admission of the Pennsylvania Synod, Sprecher declared: "I fear there will be divisions, no matter what course is taken. As to the hope of gaining over the Symbolic Lutherans, I consider it altogether delusive. If they ever join the General Synod, it will be with the hope of controlling it eventually into their own views and for their own purposes." (353) Thus, realizing the giant strides which Western confessionalism had already made, and the steady growth of the conservative element in the East, and, at the same time, fully understanding that Lutherans loyal to their Confessions would give no quarters to a counterfeit substitute of Lutheranism, Schmucker, Kurtz, Sprecher, and others decided on a *coup d'état* in order to force the issue, to create a test-question, to separate the parties, to eliminate the "symbolists," and thus forever to make the General Synod immune against genuine Old School Lutheran confessionalism and safe for their own mongrel Puritanic-Calvinistic-Methodistic-American Lutheranism.

**55. Casting Off the Mask.** — In the early part of September, 1855, leading ministers of the General Synod received a pamphlet: "Definite Platform, doctrinal and disciplinarian, for Evangelical Lutheran District Synods; constructed in accordance with the principles of the General Synod." Spaeth: "The new Confession came without a confessor. It appeared as an anonymous document, proving by that very fact that the men who concocted it were not called by God to lead the Church on this Western Continent to a better, fuller, purer conception and statement of the faith of the Gospel than that of the Fathers." However, it was not long before Schmucker was generally known to be its author. Soon after its publication Krauth, Sr., wrote: "My colleague don't disclaim the authorship, so that it has a daddy." Ten years later Schmucker

wrote: "Although my friend Dr Kurtz and myself passed it in review together, and changed a few words, every sentence of the work I acknowledge to have been written by myself." (Spaeth 1, 357 ) Besides a brief Preface the Platform contains two parts: 1 "Preliminary Principles and the Doctrinal Basis or Creed to be subscribed"; 2. "Synodical Disclaimer, or List of Symbolic Errors, rejected by the Great Body of the Churches belonging to the General Synod." Part II was not to be individually subscribed to, but published by Synod as a Disclaimer of the symbolical errors often imputed to her. (Second edition, 2. 6 ) Its chief object, as appears from the Platform itself, was to obviate the influences of confessional Lutheranism coming from the West, notably from the Missouri Synod. The Preface begins. "This Definite Synodical Platform was prepared and published by consultation and cooperation of ministers of different Eastern and Western synods, connected with the General Synod, at the special request of some Western brethren, whose churches desire a more specific expression of the General Synod's doctrinal basis, being surrounded by German churches, which profess the entire mass of former symbols." (2 ) Part I expresses the same thought, stating that the "American Recension of the Augsburg Confession," as Schmucker called the Platform, had been prepared "at the special request of Western brethren, whose churches particularly need it, being intermingled with German churches, which avow the whole mass of the former symbols." (4.) Furthermore, according to the Platform, Lutherans who believe in private confession and absolution should not be admitted into the General Synod; and Part II makes it a point to state: "By the old Lutheran Synod of Missouri, consisting entirely of Europeans, this rite [private confession, etc.] is still observed." (25.) Accordingly, in order to check the progress of the Missouri Synod's Lutheranism, a more specific declaration of the General Synod's basis was deemed indispensable. In the interest of truth, they claimed, it was necessary to specify, without hesitation and reservation, the doctrines of the Augsburg Confession which were rejected, some by all, others by the great majority of the General Synod. To satisfy this alleged need of the Church, the Platform was offered to the District Synods with the direction, for the sake of uniformity,

to adopt it without further alterations and with the resolution not to receive any minister who will not subscribe to it. Thus, in publishing the Platform, Schmucker and his compeers cast off the Lutheran mask and revealed the true inwardness of their intolerant Reformed spirit — a blunder which served to frustrate their own sinister objects. The reception which this document met was a sore disappointment to its author. In the commotion which followed the publication of the Platform the conservative element was strengthened, a fact which, a decade later, led to the great secession of 1866, and gradually also to the present ascendancy of the conservatives within the General Synod, and the subsequent revision of its doctrinal basis, completed in 1913. H. J. Mann wrote in 1856: "The Platform controversy will, in the end, prove a blessing. The conservative party will arrive at a better understanding. In ten years Schmucker has not damaged himself so much in the public opinion as in the one last year." (Spaeth, 178.)

**56. Viewed Historically.** — In explanation and extenuation of the Platform blunder Dr. Mann remarked in 1856: "The more thoroughly we investigate the history of the Lutheran Church of this country, the better we will comprehend why all happened just so. No one is particularly guilty; it is a common misfortune of the times, of the conditions." (Spaeth, 175.) H. E. Jacobs explains: "The ministers, in most cases, did not obtain that thorough and many-sided liberal culture which a college course was supposed to represent, and this was felt also in their theological training. . . . It may serve as a partial explanation of the confusion that prevailed that there was not a single professor of theology in the English seminaries in the North who had obtained the liberal training of a full college course, except the professor of German theology at Gettysburg. The controversy connected with the 'Definite Platform,' prepared and published under a supervision characterized by the same defects, may be more readily understood when this is remembered." (History, 436.) The explanation offered by Dr. Jacobs might be reenforced by the report of the Directors of the Seminary in 1839: "It is to be regretted that the students generally spend so short a time in theological studies. But few attend to the full course of studies as laid down in

the Constitution The average time of the stay of the major part is only about two years. Thus the theological education of those who go out from the Seminary is necessarily defective" (23) C A Stork admitted with respect to the students at Gettysburg, notably the scholars of Prof J A Brown (since 1864): "It is true, our young men did not know Lutheran theology thoroughly; on many minor points they were cloudy." (Wolf, *Lutherans*, 371) Howbeit, explanation does not spell justification Nor is it correct to view the Definite Platform as a mere derailment, a mere incidental blunder, of the General Synod It was, on the contrary, the natural result and full development of the indifferentistic and unionistic germs which the General Synod inherited and zealously cultivated during the whole course of its history Dr. Neve: "If Schmucker and his friends had not made this mistake, now condemned by history, others would surely try to do so now. These men therefore have rendered our Church a service. We have learned much from their mistake" "Sic non canitur"—such indeed is the lesson which Lutherans may learn not only from the Platform movement, but also from the greater part of the history of the General Synod.

**57. Platform Theology.** — The Platform charges the Augsburg Confession with the following alleged errors: Approval of the ceremonies of the mass, private confession and absolution, denial of the divine obligation of the Sunday, baptismal regeneration, the real presence of the body and blood of the Savior in the Eucharist. Of the Augustana eleven articles are mutilated and eight (the eleventh and the last seven) entirely omitted. The following declaration takes the place of the Eleventh Article: "As private confession and absolution, which are inculcated in this Article, though in a modified form, have been universally rejected by the American Lutheran Church, the omission of this Article is demanded by the principle on which the American Recension of the A. C. is constructed; namely, to omit the several portions which are rejected by the great mass of our churches in this country, and to add nothing in their stead" (11) In all the articles the condemnatory sections are omitted. Even the deniers of the Trinity are not rejected. The Apostles' Creed is purged of

"He descended into hell" The Athanasian Creed is omitted. The rest of the Lutheran symbols are rejected, on account of their length and alleged errors (5.) The Platform declares: "The extraordinary length of the other former symbolic books as a whole is sufficient reason for their rejection as a prescribed creed, even if all their contents were believed to be true . . . The exaction of such an extended creed is subversive of all individual liberty of thought and freedom of Scriptural investigation." (20) Part II of the Platform, the "Synodical Disclaimer," contains a list of the symbolic errors with extracts from the Lutheran symbols, "which are rejected by the great body of the American Lutheran Church," to wit:

1. Ceremonies of the mass (A. C., Art 24; Apology, Art. 12)
2. Exorcism (Luther's *Taufbuechlein*). 3. Private confession and absolution (A. C., Art 11. 25. 28).
- 4 The denial of the divine institution and obligation of the Christian Sabbath (A. C., Art 28).
5. Baptismal regeneration (A. C., Art 2; Apology, Art. 9; Luther's Catechisms; Visitation Articles, Art. 3).
6. The outward form of baptism (Large Catechism, Smalcald Art).
- 7 Errors concerning the personal or hypostatic union of the two natures in Christ (Form of Concord, Art. 8).
- 8 The supposed special sin-forgiving power of the Lord's Supper (Apol., Art. 12; Catechisms).
9. The real presence of the body and blood of Christ in the Eucharist (A. C., Art 10; Apol., Art. 7. 8; Smalcald Art., Art 6; Small Catechism; Form of Concord, Art 7).

According to the Platform, believers in exorcism, in private confession and absolution, and in the ceremonies of the mass should not be tolerated in the General Synod. To believers in the real presence, baptismal regeneration, etc, liberty was to be granted, provided that they regard these doctrines as non-essential, cooperate peacefully with members rejecting them, and adopt the Platform. Dr. Mann was right when he characterized the Platform as "the emasculated Augsburg Confession" (Spaeth, 178.)

**58. Spirit of "Synodical Disclaimer."** — While the first part of the Platform eliminates the distinctively Lutheran doctrines, the second part emphatically condemns them and teaches the opposite tenets of the Reformed Church. On exorcism the Platform remarks: "In the American Lutheran Church it was

never received, and is regarded as unscriptural, and highly objectionable, under the most favorable explanation that can be given it" (23.) On private confession and absolution: "How dangerous the entire doctrine of absolution and forgiving power of the ministry is to the spirituality of the Church and to the doctrine of justification by grace alone through faith in Jesus Christ, is clearly evident." "John 20, 23: 'Whosoever sins . . .' either refers to a miraculous power bestowed on the apostles to discern the condition of the heart, and to announce pardon of God to truly penitent individuals; or it confers on the ministry, in all ages, the power to announce, in general, the conditions on which God will pardon sinners; but it contains no authority for applying these promises to individuals, as is done in private absolution." (26.) On baptismal regeneration: "If Baptism is not a converting ordinance in adults, it cannot be in infants . . . Of regeneration, in the proper sense of the term, infants are incapable; for it consists in a radical change in our religious views of the divine character, law, etc.; a change in our religious feelings, and in our religious purposes and habits of action; of none of which are children capable." Regeneration "must consist mainly in a change of that *increased* predisposition to sin arising from action, of that preponderance of sinful habits formed by voluntary indulgence of our natural depravity, after we have reached years of moral agency. But infants have no such *increased* predisposition, no *habits* of sin prior to moral agency, consequently there can be no change of them, no regeneration in this meaning of the term." "Baptismal regeneration, either in infants or adults, is therefore a doctrine not taught in the Word of God, and fraught with much injury to the souls of men, although inculcated in the former Symbolical Books." (30 f.) On the hypostatic union: "The chief error on this subject is the supposition that the human and divine natures of Christ, to a certain extent, interchange attributes. This, in common with all other Protestant churches, we regard as contrary to the Holy Volume." "The supposition that humanity in any case acquired some attributes of divinity tends to give plausibility to the apotheosis of heroes and the pagan worship of the Virgin Mary." The Platform emphatically condemns the doctrine of Article 8 of the Form of Concord: "Hence we be-

lieve, teach, and confess that the Virgin Mary did not conceive and bring forth simply a mere man, but *the true Son of God*; for which reason she is also rightly called, and *she is truly, the mother of God*. . . . He consequently now, not only as God, but *as man*, knows all things, is able to do all things. . . . His flesh is a true, vivifying food, and His blood is a true, vivifying drink." (35 f.) The Platform furthermore rejects the doctrine that the Lord's Supper "offers forgiveness of sins," and "that the real body and blood of the Savior are present at the Eucharist, in some mysterious way, and are received by the mouth of every communicant, worthy or unworthy." (38 f.) The Platform declares: "During the first quarter of this century the conviction that our Reformers did not purge away the whole of the Romish error from this doctrine gained ground universally, until the great mass of the whole Lutheran Church, before the year 1817, had rejected the doctrine of the real presence" (40 ) With respect to the doctrine that the proper and natural body and blood of Christ are received in the Lord's Supper, the Platform remarks: "Now we cannot persuade ourselves that this is the view of a single minister of the General Synod or of many out of it." (42.)

### PLATFORM CONTROVERSY.

59. **Champions of the Platform.** — "The principal effect of the Definite Platform," says Dr. Spaeth, "was to open the eyes even of the indifferent and undecided ones, and to cause them to reflect and to realize the ultimate designs of the men at the helm of the General Synod. A storm of indignation burst against the perpetrators of this attack on the venerable Augustana. Many men who were before numbered with 'American Lutheranism,' and whose full sympathy with the movement was confidently expected, had nothing but stern rebuke for it." (1, 360.) Howbeit, the Platform was not in lack of ardent defenders. To some of the ministers it was not radical enough. Dr. Morris remarks: "Extremely un-Lutheran, un-churchly, and even rationalistic positions were assumed by some who defended the Platform." (Wolf, *Lutherans*, 364 ) In the *Observer*, December 7, 1855, a correspondent maintained that it was incorrect to speak of the Augustana as "our con-

fession," since of Lutheran theologians not one in twenty was governed in doctrine and practise by this Symbol (*L. u. W.* 1856, 28 ) In the following year the *Observer* published a protest of Rev. Kitz, censuring the Platform for granting toleration to believers in baptismal regeneration and the real presence (*L. u. W.* 1857, 27 ) At Gettysburg Seminary, self-evidently, Schmucker zealously propagated his Reformed theology, while his brother-in-law, C F Schaeffer, who had entered 1856, was the exponent of a mild confessionalism. E J. Wolf: "At Gettysburg, in the same building, one professor in almost every lecture disparaged and discredited the Confessions, while another one constantly inspired his students with the highest[?] veneration for them." (*Lutherans*, 441 ) Jacobs: "The students were soon divided, but the gain was constantly upon the conservative side." (*History*, 427 ) But while thus at Gettysburg conservative influences, in a measure, were counteracting the Platform theology, Wittenberg Seminary, at Springfield, O , the theological center of the Western synods, was unanimous, decided, and most advanced in its advocacy. Sprecher, the leader of "American Lutheranism" in the West, wrote concerning the Platform: "It is the very thing we have long needed in our Church; it will require every man to declare that he is for or against us, and will secure our American Lutheran Church against the insidious efforts of the Old Lutherians to remodel her." "If the New School brethren do not soon decide whether they will give the Church the positive form which it must take in this country ere long, the Old School will decide it for them by making all their synods stand on the Unaltered Augsburg Confession. I do not see what difficulty can be in the way. If those five dogmas rejected [by the Platform] are errors at all, they are very serious errors, and I do not see why there should be so great a desire to be associated with those who teach them. The difference between the Old School and the New School party is of such a nature that they cannot agree except by being silent or separate. If we did not intend to push this matter through, we should never have agitated it at all" (Spaeth, 1, 359.) It goes without saying that B. Kurtz acted the champion of the new confession. When, in 1855, prior to the publication of the Platform, the Synod of Northern Illinois, in its constitution,

declared the Augustana and Luther's Small Catechism a "correct" exhibition of the divine truth, Kurtz wrote in the *Observer*: "This is certainly a tremendous leap backward to the patriarchs of the American Lutheran Church. In this enlightened country of free thought and action such high-churchism cannot long maintain itself; its most peculiar fruit is bigotry, ostracism, strife, and separation." (*Lutheraner*, Feb 13, 1855.) In the same spirit Kurtz edited the *Observer* after the appearance of the Platform. In an issue of January, 1856, he maintained that the Platform offered nothing new; in the past every member of the General Synod had practised according to its principles; now one merely was to do openly and honestly what heretofore he had been doing with a *reservatio mentalis* (*L. u. W.* 1856, 64.) Several months later Kurtz published the list of rejected errors of the Symbolical Books, and in a number of subsequent articles supported the Platform, and, at the same time, attacked the distinctive doctrines of Lutheranism, misrepresenting them in Calvinistic fashion (*L. u. W.* 1856, 140 ff.; 1857, 61; 1862, 152; 1917, 375.) Nor did Kurtz in the following years repent of, or change, his attitude. In the *Observer* of June 29, 1860, he declared: "We are qualified to formulate a confession of faith not only just as well, but better than those who lived three hundred years ago. We now have men in our Church who understand just as much of the Bible and of theology as our fathers. If this were not the case, we must be stupid scholars, a degenerated generation" (*L. u. W.* 6, 252.) In the same year: "May those, then, who are opposed to the progress backwards, to liturgies, to priestly gowns, to bands, candles, crucifixes, baptismal regeneration, the real presence, priestly confession and absolution, and all other phases of the half-papists, stand firmly by the old *Observer*." (*L. u. W.* 1860, 318.) In the *Observer*, December 26, 1862, Kurtz said: Wisdom did not die with the Reformers; nor would it die with the present generation. Giant strides had been made in science, history, chemistry, philology. The progress in astronomy enabled us to understand the Bible better than our fathers. Geology taught us to explain the first chapter of Genesis more correctly than a hundred years ago. Even if we were dwarfs compared with the Reformers, with our increased advantages we ought to understand the Bible better than they. A dwarf,

standing on the shoulders of a giant, can see farther than the giant himself. A confession of faith, therefore, ought not to be like the laws of the Medes and Persians, but subject to improvement and growing perfection. Luther and his colaborers explained the Bible more correctly than any like number of their contemporaries. But we do not believe that they understood it as well as God's enlightened people of the present. Indeed, an intelligent Sunday-school child has a clearer insight into the plan of salvation, etc., than John the Baptist, the greatest of prophets. Is it, then, to be assumed that since the middle of the sixteenth century no progress was made in Biblical learning? (*L. u. W.* 1863, 92.) However, always guided by expediency, and hence able also "to do otherwise," the *Observer*, April 13, 1866, wrote: "We have all agreed that the Unaltered Augsburg Confession is the only general platform upon which all of us can stand. There are some among us, to the number of whom the writer belongs, who have always believed and still think that an American Recension of this venerable document, as presented in the Definite Platform, would give us a faith more in harmony with the Scripture. But where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty, the greatest liberty compatible with the unity of true Evangelical Protestantism. To make concessions within reasonable limitations we have accordingly deemed our religious duty." (*L. u. W.* 1866, 185.) In its issue of January 17, 1908, the *Observer* again claims the liberty of revising the confessions. (*L. u. W.* 1908, 90.) Self-evidently, the *American Lutheran* was in sympathy with the Platform. In 1873 it declared its standpoint as follows: "We American Lutherans adopt the Augsburg Confession only in a qualified sense, *viz.*, as teaching the fundamental truths of religion in a manner substantially correct, but containing also some inaccuracies with respect to the Sacraments, private confession, absolution, and the Christian Sabbath" (*L. u. W.* 1873, 29.)

60. Opponents of the Platform. — S. S. Schmucker boasted with respect to the Platform that all intelligent Americans were on his side. However, his opponents proved to be much stronger and more numerous than he had anticipated, though most of them were in essential agreement with his un-Lutheran theology, merely resenting his intolerant

spirit and public assault on the "venerable Augustana." Among the men who fiercely denounced the new confession was J. A. Brown, who also followed up his attack with charges for Schmucker's impeachment at Gettysburg, and in 1857, with a book, *The New Theology*. Yet Dr Brown's theological views and the views of the Platform were not nearly so far apart as his assaults on Schmucker seemed to warrant. Brown was a Reformed theologian and just as determined an opponent of genuine Lutheranism as Schmucker and Kurtz. Dr. Wolf: "Brown contended with might and main against what he considered the revival of the Old Lutheran Theology." (370.) And Brown's case was also that of F. W. Conrad (professor of Homiletics in Wittenberg College from 1850 to 1855, and part owner and editor of the *Observer* from 1863 to 1898), who in 1855, when required by the Wittenberg Synod to defend the Platform, resigned as professor and as editor of the *Evangelical Lutheran*, stating that he, too, considered the "errors" enumerated in the Platform as real errors, but was able neither to find all of them in the Augustana nor to identify himself with the intolerance of the Platform men. (*L. u. W.* 1856, 94 ) Occupying a unionistic position similar to that of Dr. Conrad, H. W. Harkey, in his *Olive Branch*, published at Springfield, Ill., also opposed the fanaticism of Kurtz, Schmucker, Sprecher, etc., but not their Reformed theology, which, indeed, he shared essentially. (*L. u. W.* 1857, 313; 1858, 28.) The man who disappointed Schmucker perhaps more than any one else was his colleague Charles Philip Krauth, who made no secret of his aversion to the Platform. In a letter to his son he wrote: "The American Recension of the Augsburg Confession doesn't seem to go down well. It has received many hard blows. . . . A more stupid thing could hardly have been originated. *Quem Deus vult perdere prius dementat*. How will it end? I have thought, in smoke. But I have all along had fears, and they are strengthened of late, that it will divide the General Synod. It is said that my colleague is determined to press the matter to the utmost. . . . I regret exceedingly the injury which the Church is sure to sustain. Mr. Passavant's idea of a paper in opposition to the *Observer* I approve. There ought to be an antidote to the *Observer* somewhere." In the *Observer* of February 15, 1856, Krauth, Sr., published nine rea-

sons why he opposed the Platform, the chief grievance, however, its Reformed theology, was hardly hinted at. Krauth's plea was for peace and mutual toleration. "I feel deeply solicitous that our prospering Church may not be divided," said he. "I shall do all that I can to hold it together. I will pray for the peace of our Zion," etc. His main argument against the Platform was that it proscribed brethren who were received with the understanding that they were to occupy a position coordinate with that of others, and asked every symbolical Lutheran to withdraw or dishonor himself. (Spaeth, 1, 372 f.) Pacification of the Church by mutual toleration — such was the solution of the Platform controversy offered and advocated by his son, Charles Porterfield. To this Krauth, Sr., agreed. April 2, 1857, he wrote to his son: "I am decidedly of opinion that the General Synod ought to do something effectual for the pacification of the Church. I concur in the views you express, and believe, unless such views prevail, the Church must ere long be rent into fragments. Whilst I am anxious for such an agreement in regard to a doctrinal basis as will embrace all the wings of Lutheranism in our country, I very much wish we could agree on forms of worship in accordance with the liturgical character of our Church, and erect a barrier against the fanaticism and Methodism which so powerfully control some of our ministers and people." (380.) W. M. Reynolds, in the *Evangelical Review* which he had established 1849 (1870 succeeded by the *Lutheran Quarterly*), denounced the Platform as a declaration of "separation from the whole Lutheran Church of the past." "We trust," said he, "that no Lutheran synod will be beguiled into the awful movement here so abruptly, yet so confidently proposed to them — to revolutionize their whole previous history, and declare separation from the whole Lutheran Church of the past, and all their brethren in the present who hold to the faith of their fathers, 'the faith once delivered to the saints.''" (360.) Reynolds, who publicly renounced his former un-Lutheran views and withdrew his endorsement of Kurtz, was hailed by many as the leader of the conservatives in the General Synod. But, his confessional endeavors being vitiated and neutralized by his fundamental unionistic attitude, he, too, disappointed and failed the friends of true Lutheranism. He opened the pages

of the *Evangelical Review* to both, liberals as well as conservatives, to the advocates as well as the opponents of the Platform and its theology. Reynolds stood for mutual toleration, and in 1864 — turned Episcopalian (*L u W.* 1857, 314; 1870, 156 ) J. N. Hoffmann entered the controversy with his "Broken Platform," and W. J. Mann with his pamphlet "A Plea for the Augsburg Confession," according to Spaeth "the strongest refutation of the Definite Platform" (*L u W.* 1856, 75; 1857, 283 ) Dr. Mann wrote, May 7, 1856: "If Schmucker had not the *Observer* as an ally, he would accomplish absolutely nothing. As it is, however, the two gentlemen fabricate a public opinion, supported by a multitude of uninformed members of the Lutheran Church. The mass of all influential, well-meaning members, preachers as well as laymen, whatever their views may otherwise be, are indignant at Schmucker, Kurtz, *Observer*, and the whole Platform affair. I would not be astonished if the matter should lead to a breach between us and the General Synod. The consequence will be that involuntarily we shall be brought closer to the strict Lutheranism, all the more so as the Missourians of late seem to become milder." But Dr. Mann was rudely awakened from his optimism when, in the following year, his "Lutheranism in America: an essay on the present condition of the Lutheran Church in the United States," was severely criticized even by Charles Philip Krauth, in the *Evangelical Review*. And the result? "I have no desire at all to make any further concessions to Old Lutheranism," Mann meekly declared in a letter of April 15, 1857, in which he referred to the cold reception and stern rebuke which his book had received by the press within the General Synod. (Spaeth, 179 f.) Thus even the most conservative men within the General Synod rendered the cause of true Lutheranism but little service in the Platform emergency. Being in the minority and without a clear insight into the nature of Lutheranism, also without an organ, except, in part, the *Evangelical Review*, they lacked the courage and seriousness to take a determined and open stand against the corrupters and assailants of Lutheranism. They favored a policy of silent, watchful waiting. H. I. Schmidt, who, in the *Evangelical Review*, had defended the Lutheran doctrine of the Lord's Supper, wrote in a letter dated February 4, 1853: "We Lutherans had better keep per-

fectly quiet at the next General Synod, and say nothing at all about 'Doctrinal Basis.' . . . If all open conflict is avoided, our cause will continue silently and surely to gain ground, and thus the character of the General Synod will gradually be changed and righted." (Spaeth, I, 349.)

61. "Pacific Overture." — The storm caused by the Platform was hardly brewing, when Old and New School men united in pouring oil on the troubled waters. Instead of holding Schmucker to strict accountability, 41 prominent ministers and laymen published in the *Observer* of February 15, 1856, a "Pacific Overture," in which they "deprecate the further prosecution of this controversy, and hereby agree to unite and abide on the doctrinal basis of the General Synod, of absolute assent to the "Word of God, as the only infallible rule of faith and practise, and fundamental agreement with the Augsburg Confession" This document was signed by such men as H. L. Baugher, M Jacobs, M. L. Stoever, S S Schmucker, Krauth, Sr., E. W. Hutter, T. Stork, C. A. Hay, W H. Lochman, M. Valentine, B Sadtler, and J. A. Brown The pledge of the "Overture" involved the obligation of abstinence from newspaper controversy. Kurtz did not sign the document, and Schmucker reserved for himself the right of replying to Mann's "Plea," which he did in *American Lutheranism Vindicated*. This book, according to the *Observer*, proves that the Augustana does teach baptismal regeneration, the bodily presence of Christ in the Eucharist, private confession and absolution, and denial of the divine institution of the Lord's Day, and that all of these doctrines are errors conflicting with the Scriptures. (*L. u. W.* 1856, 320.) Thus Kurtz and Schmucker, who had kindled the conflagration, persisted in pouring oil into the flames, while the rest were shouting, "Extinguish the fire!" H. I. Schmidt wrote from New York: "I can see no use in signing that 'Overture'; the compromise which it proposes cannot preserve the peace of the Church or prevent a disruption Schmucker has got up that 'Overture' simply because he was utterly disappointed in the effect produced by his proposed Platform; because he saw that he had raised a conflagration that was very likely to burn him up. And now, after doing all he could to disrupt the Church, after getting up a platform, the adop-

tion of which would have expelled all of us confessional Lutherans from the Lutheran Church; after laboring with all his might to fasten the charge of serious errors upon our venerable Confession, he very coolly comes forward and asks us to sign a compromise, in which, forsooth, we are to declare the points of difference between us to be non-essential. . . . No, indeed Those points are not non-essential: the Lutheran doctrine of the Sacraments is so completely interwoven with our whole view of the scheme of redemption and salvation, that concerning the Eucharist grows so directly and necessarily out of the great doctrine of Christ's Person, that for me to give up those doctrinal points alleged to be non-essential is to give up all, to give up the whole Gospel. And what good would come of patching up such a hollow peace? At the first favorable opportunity Schmucker would break it, and even if he seemed to keep quiet, he would be secretly and incessantly working and machinating against our side of the house. And, what is more, the editor of the *Observer* refuses to sign the 'Overture'; he will keep his hands unfettered, to knock us on the head right and left, as soon and as often as he pleases." Schmidt added: "Not a soul here in New York is willing to touch the 'Overture.'" (Spaeth, I, 363.) But no determined action followed on the part of Schmidt and the conservatives in New York who agreed with him.

62. Krauth, Jr., and Schmucker. — The fact that the conservatives failed to take a decided stand against Schmucker and his Platform theology was due, apart from their general policy of silent waiting, chiefly to Charles Porterfield Krauth, who was in complete agreement with the unionistic "Overture," and whose influence soon became paramount in the General Synod. Krauth counseled mutual toleration. On January 1, 1856, he had written to his father. "I have written down a few thoughts on the 'Platform,' but I do not know that I will ever prepare anything for the press on that subject. My thoughts all have an irenical direction" (376.) In the following year Krauth prepared a series of articles for the *Missionary* (published by W. A. Passavant in Pittsburgh), in which he pleaded the cause of the General Synod, and defended and justified its doctrinal basis, requiring subscription only to

the "fundamentals" of the Augustana as "substantially correct" Krauth insisted that, while the Augustana must remain unmutated and unchanged, liberty should be granted to such as, *e g*, deny the real presence in the Lord's Supper. The Lutheran and the other churches of the Reformation, he argued, agree as to the divine institution and perpetual obligation of the Eucharist, the administration in both kinds, the necessity of a living faith for enjoying its blessings, and the rejection of transubstantiation and the mass. And securing these points of the Tenth Article of the Augsburg Confession, Krauth continued: "Let the General Synod allow perfect freedom, as she has hitherto done, to reject or receive the rest of the article." (Jacobs, 431.) Spaeth remarks with respect to the articles published by Krauth in defense of the General Synod: "In looking over the articles, we do not wonder that the leader in the Platform movement was willing to have, and actually proposed and drew up, a compromise on the basis laid down there. For while the articles kept the Confession intact in form, they abandoned it in fact. They absolutely coordinated truth and error on the disputed points and said: 'Tolerate us in holding the truth[?], and we will tolerate you in holding the error.'" "There was evidently," Dr. Spaeth continues, "in those days a singular approach between the leader of American Lutheranism and Charles Porterfield Krauth, which even inspired the New School men with a hope of ultimately 'seeing Charles right,' for whom they personally had nothing but the kindest feelings. 'I think,' wrote his father after the Reading Convention of the General Synod, 'you have become pretty much of a favorite with Dr. S S Schmucker. He does not think you so hard a Lutheran, and your zeal for the General Synod was quite to his taste. I hope you will continue, as you have heretofore done, to treat him with respect.'" (1, 409.) What Dr. Krauth objected to was not so much the theology of the Platform as, on the one hand, the intolerance which it demanded, and, on the other hand, the mutilation of the venerable Augustana, the Magna Charta of Lutheranism. Also in the controversy between J. A. Brown and Schmucker, in which the latter's teaching on natural depravity, regeneration, and justification was declared unsound, Krauth, Jr., defended his

former teacher with the result that the impeachment proceedings, contemplated at Gettysburg against Schmucker, were arrested (411) Thus, as far as the leading theologians were concerned, the commotion caused by the Platform ended in an agreement to disagree

### POSITION OF DISTRICT SYNODS.

**63. For and Against the Platform.** — Dr E J Wolf, 1889 "The Platform was indignantly and universally rejected by the Eastern synods" (365) Dr Jacobs, 1893: "It was endorsed by one of the smaller synods in Ohio, but everywhere else it aroused intense indignation, as a misrepresentation and detraction of the Lutheran Church." (426.) Dr Neve, 1915: "Only three smaller District Synods in Ohio adopted the Platform temporarily, the East Ohio, the Olive Branch, and the Wittenberg Synods. At all other places it was most decidedly rejected, not only by men of the synods under whose leadership, soon after, the General Council was organized, but just as decidedly by such as remained in the General Synod." — Among the facts in the case are the following The Wittenberg Synod (organized 1847 in Ohio and led by Ezra Keller and S Sprecher, professors of Wittenberg College), claiming to be "wholly loyal to the doctrines and interests of the General Synod," adopted the Platform in September, 1855, stating that the General Synod in the past had given the Augustana only a limited recognition without specifying the doctrines which were to be omitted, and that now the Platform, in the interest of truth, had pointed out the five errors of the Augustana which the great majority of the General Synod had long ago viewed as unscriptural and Roman Synod resolved not to receive any pastor who would not accept the Platform as his own confession. (*L. u. W* 1855, 319. 336) In September, 1855, the Olive Branch Synod of Indiana adopted the Platform unanimously, and, in October of the same year, the East Ohio Synod, with but one dissenting vote. (350 381) In June, 1856, the Miami Synod declared its allegiance to the Augustana, with the limitation that they reject as errors contained in this Confession the approval of certain ceremonies of the mass, private confession and absolution, the denial of the divine obligation of

the Sabbath, the doctrines of baptismal regeneration and of the real presence in the Eucharist. (1856, 349.) In September, 1856, the Wittenberg Synod recommended the Platform for adoption to its congregations, and at the same time expressed satisfaction and joy that the Platform had been adopted by the English Synod of Ohio, the Olive Branch Synod of Indiana, the Northern Synod of the same State, and by the Kentucky Synod; that the Miami Synod had accepted the Augsburg Confession in the sense of the Platform; and that the Pittsburgh Synod, through influence of the Platform, was now immune against "symbolism" (1856, 380 ) The Synod of Southern Illinois (organized 1856, and in 1897 united with the Synod of Central Illinois under the name of Synod of Central and Southern Illinois), in October, 1857, unanimously approved of the Platform as a measure against the insidious tendencies of symbolism (1857, 352 ) It was a sore disappointment to the Platform men when the Synod of East Pennsylvania, in 1855, at the motion of J A. Brown (who was in essential agreement with Schmucker, doctrinally), unanimously condemned, and "most solemnly warned" against, the Platform as a "most dangerous attempt to change the doctrinal basis and revolutionize the existing character of the Lutheran churches now united in the General Synod." (1855, 337 ) The Synod of West Pennsylvania, urged by the Synod of East Pennsylvania to endorse its resolutions, refused to enter the controversy or pass on the Platform, declaring that they were satisfied with their present constitution and unwilling to add new test-questions (1855, 320.) It came as a relief to Kurtz and the Platform men when the Synod of Central Pennsylvania, in May, 1856, unanimously and solemnly, by a rising vote, adopted the Platform. (1856, 223.) In October, 1856, the Synod of Maryland declared that every member was at liberty to accept or reject the alleged errors of the Augsburg Confession, enumerated by the Platform, provided that thereby the divine institution of the Sabbath was not rejected, nor the doctrinal basis of the General Synod subverted. (1856, 382.) In October, 1856, the Allegheny Synod declared its adherence to the doctrinal basis of the General Synod, but, at the same time, rejected the doctrines enumerated by the Platform as errors contained in the Augsburg Confession. (1856, 27; 1857, 156.) A similar com-

promise was adopted by the Pittsburgh Synod. The knock-out blow to the Platform came from the older, larger, and conservative synods. In May, 1856, the Ministerium of Pennsylvania, then numbering 98 pastors, condemned the Platform and reaffirmed its own basis of faith (1856, 224; 1857, 252). The New York Ministerium instructed its delegates for the convention of the General Synod in 1857 to vote against the Platform. Whence the wind was blowing was apparent also from the fact that representative men of both the New York and Pennsylvania synods participated in the Free Evangelical Lutheran Conferences (1856—1859), advocated and led by Walther (1856, 348).

64. Pittsburgh and Hartwick Synods.—In the *Observer*, February 15, 1856, Kurtz suggested with respect to the Platform controversy that a District Synod adopt a resolution to the effect that the Augustana did not contain the errors charged with by the Platform, and that respecting these doctrines every member of Synod was at liberty to follow his own judgment. In accordance with this advice the Pittsburgh Synod, in the same year, compromised the differences of the Old and New School men in a number of resolutions framed by Charles Porterfield Krauth, who then was still spending his efforts in trying to mediate between the adherents and opponents of the Definite Platform. Among these resolutions are the following: "II. Resolved, That while the basis of our General Synod has allowed of diversity in regard to some parts of the Augsburg Confession, that basis never was designed to imply the right to alter, amend, or curtail the Confession itself." "III. Resolved, That while this Synod, resting on the Word of God as the sole authority in matters of faith, on its infallible warrant rejects the Romish doctrine of the real presence of transubstantiation, and with it the doctrine of consubstantiation; rejects the Mass, and all ceremonies distinctive of the Mass, denies any power in the Sacraments as an *opus operatum*, or that the blessings of Baptism and the Lord's Supper can be received without faith; rejects auricular confession and priestly absolution; holds that there is no priesthood on earth except that of all believers, and that God only can forgive sins; and maintains the sacred obligation of the Lord's Day; and while we

would with our whole heart reject any part of any confession which taught doctrines in conflict with this our testimony nevertheless, before God and His Church, we declare that in our judgment the Augsburg Confession, properly interpreted, is in perfect consistence with this our testimony and with Holy Scripture as regards the errors specified." "IV. Resolved, That while we do not wish to conceal the fact that some parts of the doctrine of our Confession in regard to the Sacraments are received in different degrees by different brethren, yet that even in these points, wherein we as brethren in Christ agree to differ till the Holy Ghost shall make us see eye to eye, the differences are not such as to destroy the foundation of faith, our unity in labor, our mutual confidence, and our tender love" "VI Resolved, That if we have indulged harsh thoughts and groundless suspicions, if we have without reason criminated and recriminated, we here humbly confess our fault before our adorable Redeemer, beseeching pardon of Him and of each other," etc "VII Resolved, That we will resist all efforts to sow dissensions among us on the ground of minor differences, all efforts on the one hand, to restrict the liberty which Christ has given us, or, on the other, to impair the purity of the 'faith once delivered to the saints,' and that with new ardor we will devote ourselves to the work of the Gospel," etc. (Spaeth, I, 378.) A stand similar to the one of the Pittsburgh Synod was taken in the same year, 1856, by the Hartwick Synod, in declaring on the one hand, that they adopt the fundamental doctrines of the Augsburg Confession, other articles of this Confession, however, only when rightly understood and interpreted, and in rejecting, on the other hand, the doctrines enumerated in the third of the Pittsburgh resolutions. (*L. u. W.* 1856, 349.) On the part of the Franckean Synod this caused a declaration to the effect that they would not have withdrawn (1837) if Hartwick had taken this stand earlier. Hartwick answered, 1857 that they had not adopted a new platform, but merely the General Synod's "interpretation of the Augustana." (*L. u. W.* 1857, 352; 1864, 314; 1866, 119.)

**65. The Pittsburgh Compromise.** — The Pittsburgh resolutions, notably the third (adopted also in 1864 at York by the General Synod, and since known as the York Resolution)

breathe a unionistic and, in part, a Reformed spirit. Conspicuous among their un-Lutheran features are the following. With respect to the Lutheran doctrines rejected by Schmucker and his compeers, the Pittsburgh compromise declares in general: "We as brethren in Christ agree to differ." The theological attitude of the notorious union letter of 1845 was thus practically reaffirmed and the doctrines distinctive of Lutheranism declared irrelevant. Every Lutheran synod, according to the Pittsburgh agreement, was, indeed, to recognize the Augustana unmutilated, but, on the other hand, grant complete liberty to deviate from its doctrines in the manner of the supporters of the Platform. In addition to this unionistic feature the Pittsburgh compromise, at least in three important points, makes concessions to the Reformed tenets of the Platform theology. It does not only fail to confess the Lutheran doctrines of the Lord's Supper, absolution, and the Sunday, at a time when these doctrines were universally denied and assailed also within the General Synod, and when, accordingly, a failure to confess them was tantamount to an open denial, but itself rejects them. Concerning the Sunday, Article 28 of the Augsburg Confession declares: "For those who judge that by the authority of the Church the observance of the Lord's Day instead of the Sabbath-day was ordained as a thing necessary, do greatly err. Scripture has abrogated the Sabbath-day." Over against this plain teaching the General Synod always held that "the observance of the Sunday is binding on all by divine requirement." (*Lutheran Observer*, Oct 1, 1915.) Siding with this un-Lutheran position, the third of the Pittsburgh resolutions declares: "We adhere to the divine authority of the Sabbath as the Lord's Day." Again, absolution by Christians, and especially the minister of a Christian congregation, was one of the doctrines abhorred by the Platform men. As late as 1864 even C. P. Krauth regarded the Eleventh Article of the Augustana as excluded from the confessional subscription of the General Synod. The Pittsburgh compromise rejects "priestly absolution" and maintains "that God only can forgive sins" on earth, thus openly disavowing a specific Lutheran doctrine and coinciding with Schmucker and Kurtz, Zwingli, and Calvin. Furthermore, the Lutheran Church most emphatically teaches "the real presence" of the body and blood of

Christ in the Lord's Supper. And in the days of Schmucker, and later, this doctrine, openly assailed and denied by the leaders of the General Synod, was generally, though erroneously, identified with, and termed, "consubstantiation," without as well as within the General Synod. The *Encyclopedia of Religious Knowledge*, of 1854, edited by J. Newton Brown, describes "consubstantiation" as "a tenet of the Lutheran Church respecting the presence of Christ in the Lord's Supper. Luther denied that the elements were changed after consecration, and therefore taught that the bread and wine indeed remain, but that, together with them, there is present the substance of the body and blood of Christ, which is literally received by communicants." As late as 1899 Philip Schaff wrote in his *Creeds of Christendom*: "The Lutheran Church, as represented in Luther's writings and in the Form of Concord, rejects transubstantiation, and also the doctrine of impanation, *i. e.*, a local inclusion of Christ's body and blood in the elements (*localis inclusio in pane*), or a permanent and extrasacramental conjunction of the two substances (*durabilis aliqua conjunctio extra usum sacramenti*); but it teaches consubstantiation in the sense of a sacramental conjunction of the two substances effected by the consecration, or a real presence of Christ's very body and blood in, with, and under (*in, cum, et sub*) bread and wine. The word consubstantiation, however, is not found in the Lutheran symbols, and is rejected by Lutheran theologians if used in the sense of impanation." (1, 232.) Down to the present day the Lutheran doctrine of the real presence has been universally designated by its opponents as "consubstantiation." (*L. u W.* 1856, 33 115. 255.) Respecting this use of the term outside of the Lutheran Church, compare also Worcester's Dictionary; *Cyclopedia*, Harper and Brothers, 1894; Century Dictionary, 1906; Heyse, *Fremdwörterbuch*; etc. And as to the use made of the term within the General Synod, S. S. Schmucker, B. Kurtz, S. Sprecher, and the rest of the Platform theologians always designated the Lutheran doctrine of the real presence as consubstantiation. As late as 1880 Dr. Helwig wrote in the *Lutheran Evangelist*: "The Missouri Lutherans adhere as closely as possible to the doctrines of Martin Luther, even his consubstantiation theory with respect to the Holy Eucharist according to the words: in, with, and under the

bread." (*L. u. W.* 1880, 246.) Viewed, then, in its historical context, the third of the Pittsburgh resolutions, instead of plainly stating and boldly confessing the Lutheran doctrine of the real presence, disavows it, at least indirectly, declaring: This Synod "rejects the Romish doctrine of the real presence or transubstantiation, and with it the doctrine of consubstantiation." To cap the climax, the compromise proceeds: "Before God and His Church we declare that in our judgment the Augsburg Confession, properly interpreted, is in perfect consistence with this our testimony and with Holy Scripture as regards the errors specified." How Charles Porterfield Krauth was able thinkingly to write as he did is a problem which still awaits a satisfactory explanation. Thus, then, though formally acknowledging the Augustana and denying the right "to alter, amend, or curtail the Confession itself," the Pittsburgh compromise cannot but be viewed as a distinctly unionistic and anti-Lutheran document. It was a surrender, if not to the Platform as such, at least to its theology.

#### GENERAL SYNOD'S ATTITUDE.

66. Ignoring Platform, But Endorsing Its Theology. — No formal action was taken by the conventions of the General Synod with respect either to the Definite Platform itself or its authors, abettors, and endorsers. Apart from the doctrinal indifference prevailing within the General Synod also among the conservatives, this was chiefly due to the articles published by Krauth, Jr., in defense of the General Synod in the *Missionary*. "Silently," says Dr. Spaeth, "yet no less surely, the brethren gave the most unmistakable evidence that the views therein expressed met their concurrence" (1, 409.) However, Krauth himself, in advocating mutual toleration, merely acted on the old principles of the General Synod. His policy was in keeping with its unionistic traditions of "agreeing to disagree and not to settle disputed points, but to omit them and declare them free — *quieta non movere et nota quiescere!*" Well satisfied with the course of the General Synod at its conventions in 1857 and 1859, the *Observer* wrote: "The convention at Pittsburgh has strengthened the bond of our union and shown that no question of doctrine or discipline can dis-

rupt us. We are one and inseparable. Our union is based on mutual concession. We have learned a lesson which our fathers could not learn: to give and to take." (*L u W* 1859, 285.) Officially and directly, then, the General Synod neither approved nor condemned the Platform. Nor could she consistently have taken a different course, as Schmucker had but acted on previous suggestions of Synod herself. In 1844 the Maryland Synod had appointed a committee to prepare an "Abstract," which, in a way, was to serve as a substitute for the Augsburg Confession. This "Abstract," though not adopted by the Maryland Synod, was a forerunner of the Definite Platform. Schmucker, says Dr. Spaeth, "was so much pleased with the 'Abstract' that he referred to it again and again in his lectures and articles, and even made his students commit to memory its principal statements. In an article on the 'Vocation of the American Lutheran Church' (*Ev. Review* II, 510) Schmucker said: 'With the exception of several minor shades of doctrine, in which we are more symbolic than Dr. Baugher, we could not ourselves, in so few words, give a better description of the views taught in the seminary [Gettysburg] than that contained in his 'Abstract of the Doctrines and Practises.'" (1, 114.) Also the General Synod, in 1845, at Philadelphia, following in the steps of the Maryland Synod, authorized a committee to formulate the doctrines and usages of the American Lutheran Church. Schmucker, then, in preparing and publishing the Definite Platform, was certainly not so very much out of tune with the sentiments then prevailing in, and encouraged by, the General and some of the District Synods. Consistently they could not rebuke Schmucker without condemning themselves. Accordingly, the convention of the General Synod in 1857, at Reading, took formal action neither with respect to Schmucker, nor the Platform, nor the synods which had endorsed the Platform. And while the motion of Schmucker that the Board (which had published Mann's "Plea") should not publish any writings on the existing controversies was adopted, the motion of Kurtz for a "liberal platform" found no support. (*L u W*. 1857, 218.) But, while painfully avoiding any reference to the Platform as such, the General Synod more than tolerated its theology. The convention of 1859 cordially admitted the Melancthon Synod, which

charged the Augustana with teaching the alleged errors of regeneration by Baptism, of the real presence, private confession and absolution, and the denial of the divine institution of the Sunday. At Lancaster, 1862, Synod evaded a deliverance on the question whether the Augsburg Confession contains the errors with which it was generally charged; indirectly, however, it affirmed the question by electing B. Kurtz as President. (*L. u. W.* 1862, 217.) In 1864 the Franckean Synod was admitted with a confession of her own making, from which the distinctive Lutheran doctrines were eliminated. And in order to conciliate the protesting conservatives, the General Synod in the same year passed the resolution, adopted 1856 by the Pittsburgh Synod, which served the contradictory purposes of condemning Lutheran doctrines plainly taught in the Augustana, and, at the same time, acquitting the Confession of harboring these doctrines. Thus the General Synod, though unwilling to commit herself to the Platform as such, directly and indirectly approved of its theology.

**67. Admitting Melancthon Synod.** — In 1857, on the principle of "elective affinity," and for the purpose of resisting the confessional trend in the General Synod, and encouraging and strengthening the Platform men, the Melancthon Synod was organized in the territory of the Maryland Synod, under the leadership of B. Kurtz. In its "Declaration of Faith" this Synod stated: "II. We believe that the fundamental doctrines of the Word of God are taught in a manner substantially correct in the doctrinal articles of the Augsburg Confession: 1. The divine inspiration, authority, and sufficiency of the Holy Scriptures. 2. The unity of the Godhead and the trinity of Persons therein. 3. The deity of our Lord Jesus Christ. 4. The utter depravity of human nature in consequence of the Fall. 5. The incarnation of the Son of God and His work of atonement for sinners of mankind. 6. The necessity of repentance and faith. 7. The justification of a sinner by faith alone. 8. The work of the Holy Spirit in the conversion and sanctification of the sinner. 9. The right and duty of private judgment in the interpretation of the Holy Scriptures. 10. The immortality of the soul, the resurrection of the body, the judgment of the world by Jesus Christ, with the eternal blessed-

ness of the righteous and the eternal punishment of the wicked.

11. The divine institution and perpetuity of the Christian ministry, and the ordinances of Baptism and the Lord's Supper. But while we thus publicly avow and declare our convictions in the substantial correctness of the fundamental doctrines of the Augsburg Confession, we owe it to ourselves and to the cause of evangelical truth to disavow and repudiate certain errors which are said by some to be contained in said Confession: 1. The approval of the ceremonies of the mass; 2. private confession and absolution; 3. denial of the divine obligation of the Christian Sabbath; 4. baptismal regeneration; and 5. the real presence of the body and blood of the Savior in the Eucharist. With these exceptions, whether found in the Confession or not, we believe and retain the entire Augsburg Confession, with all the great doctrines of the Reformation." (*L. u. W.* 1858, 28.) In spite of this attitude toward the Augustana the General Synod, in 1859, on motion of Krauth, Jr., passed the resolution: "Resolved, That we cordially admit the Melancthon Synod, and . . . we would fraternally solicit them to consider whether a change, in their doctrinal basis, of the paragraph in regard to certain alleged errors would not tend to the promotion of mutual love, and the furtherance of the great objects for which we are laboring together." (*Proceedings* 1859, 11.) The vote for the admission of the un-Lutheran Synod, registering the victory of the liberals and the defeat of the conservatives, stood 98 to 26, the entire delegation of the Pennsylvania Ministerium and the three Scandinavian delegates being recorded in the negative. Without further protest on the part of the conservatives "the credentials of the [Melancthon Synod] delegates were then presented and their names entered upon the roll of Synod." (12) Confirming their doctrinal position, the Melancthon Synod, in 1860, by formal resolution, approved of a sermon delivered by B Kurtz in which he denounced baptismal regeneration as "a part of papistical superstition" and the real presence of the body and blood of Christ in, with, and under the bread and wine as "consubstantiation," and "just as untenable and absurd as transubstantiation." (*L. u. W.* 1860, 384.) Considering the Constitution of the General Synod together with the fact that the Platform synods had not been molested, the admission of

the Melancthon Synod, advocated by Krauth, cannot be construed as inconsistent. It must, however, be regarded as an indirect approval, on the part of the General Synod, of the Platform theology. Dr. Mann remarked, "he doubted not that there was much good in the constitution of the Melancthon Synod, but he would not eat poisoned bread, though there was much good flour in it." (*L. u. W.* 1859, 196)

**68. Synod's Position Explained.** — In 1859 the General Synod resolved that S. W. Harkey publish, in German as well as in English, the sermon delivered by him as President of Synod at the opening of the convention. (*Proceedings*, 48) Harkey was an opponent of the Platform on the order of Brown and Conrad. In 1852, in his inaugural address as professor of theology at the Illinois State University in Springfield, he had declared that we must take a firm foothold in the Augsburg Confession as a whole without binding the consciences of men to its unessential individual determinations; and that the doctrine of the symbols on the Sacraments belongs to the points concerning which they had agreed to differ. (*Lutheraner* 9, 99.) Reaffirming this position in the sermon, endorsed by the General Synod in 1859, Harkey said: "We want love as much as orthodoxy, yes, a thousand times more than what some men call orthodoxy." (6.) "The General Synod cannot and does not require perfect unity or uniformity in all points of doctrine" (10.) "The General Synod adopted it [Augustana] as to fundamentals, and to these she requires unqualified subscription." (12.) "Objections have been urged against the expression 'fundamental doctrines,' as meaning one thing in the mouth of one man and a different thing in that of another — that to some everything is fundamental and to others only a few points. Now I cannot reply to this at length, at present, but have only to say in few words that there are fundamental doctrines in Christianity, and everybody not spoiled by his theory or philosophy knows what they are [the doctrines held in common by all evangelical denominations]. Indeed, I feel like sternly rebuking the infidelity which lies concealed beneath this objection, as if Christians had not been able to determine, in eighteen hundred years, what are the fundamental, chief, or great doctrines of their holy religion.

Down on all such quibbling! Others have objected to the words 'substantially correct,' as meaning anything or nothing, at pleasure. This, like the other objection, is a quibble. None can err here, unless it be wilfully. . . . The amount of the whole is, '*In necessariis unitas, in dubiis libertas, in omnibus caritas.*' This is as far as the General Synod has gone or could go; but it does not interfere with the liberty of the District Synods. Any District Synod may go beyond this, and adopt the Augsburg Confession in an unqualified manner; or it may state the points in which it dissents from it, and if not 'fundamental,' no objection can be made to its admission into the General Synod; but no body adopting a different Confession, or the Augsburg Confession less fully than as containing 'the fundamental doctrines of the Word of God in a manner substantially correct,' could be admitted into the union of the General Synod." (13.) "Does any one say doctrinal 'tares' are found in it, growing among the pure wheat of God's truth, and that he is anxious only 'to pluck up the tares'? I answer, 'Nay; lest while you gather up the tares, you root up also the wheat with them.' Let the venerable Confession stand just as it is, especially since you are bound only to receive it as containing the fundamental truths of God's Word" (14.) "Cease, O! cease from your controversies and disputes about non-essential points of doctrine and practise, and labor with all your might for the conversion and salvation of immortal souls!" (27.) In agreement with Harkey, Dr. Reynolds had declared in the *Evangelical Review*, July, 1858, that within the General Synod every one was privileged either to reject or to accept the doctrines enumerated as errors by the Platform (*L. u. W.* 1858, 274.) And prior to, and in agreement with, both, Krauth, Jr., had maintained in the *Missionary*, April 30, 1857, that such men as Schmucker and Kurtz formed a legitimate variety in the General Synod. (Spaeth, 1, 397.) "The Church in the United States," said Krauth, "wants neither Symbololatry nor Schism, neither a German Lutheranism, in an exclusive sense, nor an American Lutheranism, in a separatistic one, but an Evangelical Lutheranism broad enough to embrace both, and to make each vitalize and bless the other, and supply the mutual defects of each. She will abide by the essentials of her Scripture-doctrine and of

her Christian life, but she will use her liberty to adapt herself to her new position on this continent. She will neither be juggled out of her faith by one set of operators, nor out of her freedom by another. She will hold fast that which she has, and those who strive to take her crown from her will be remembered only by their utter and ignominious failure. The General Synod cannot take a higher position as to doctrine than her present one, she cannot take a lower one, therefore she must remain where she is" (401.) "That Church, then, is not Evangelical Lutheran which officially rejects the Augsburg Confession, or officially rejects, or requires, directly or indirectly, on the part of its members, a rejection of the Augsburg Confession, or a connivance at such official rejection." (407) Doctrinally, then, the General Synod, as such, had not advanced beyond the union letter of November, 1845. The scheme and dream of the New School men, however, of officially substituting a new confession for the Augustana was doomed to oblivion.

#### YORK CONVENTION.

**69. Radical Franckean Synod Admitted.** — The Franckean Synod was organized 1837 by four members who had withdrawn from the Hartwick Synod for these reasons: "1. To license pious, intelligent men, sound in faith, although they may not be classically educated, or have pursued a regular theological course; 2 to license or admit none to the ministry who are unacquainted with experimental religion" The synod pressed "new measures" and advocated abstinence. In a civil suit, in 1844, Vice-Chancellor Sandford decided that the Franckean Synod was not Lutheran, and awarded the property involved in the suit to the two congregations in Schoharie County, which had refused to follow their pastor in joining the new synod. (*L. u. W.* 1864, 187 283.) The Franckean Synod had abandoned the Augsburg Confession and adopted a "Declaration of Faith," of which Sandford says: "1. It does not maintain and declare the doctrine of the Trinity, or that the three Persons constituting the Godhead are equal in power and glory; or even that there are three Persons constituting the Deity. 2. It does not declare or admit the divinity of Jesus Christ, or His equality with God the Father. 3. It does not teach or declare

that man will be condemned to punishment in a future state because of original or inherited sin, unless it be repented of; or that it condemneth all who are not born again of water and the Holy Ghost" (Jacobs, 385.) The paragraph of the "Declaration" on Baptism and the Lord's Supper reads: "9. That Christ has instituted the ordinances of Baptism and the Lord's Supper for the perpetual observance and edification of the Church. Baptism is the initiatory ordinance, and signifies the necessity of holiness of heart; and the Lord's Supper is frequently to be celebrated as a token of faith in the atonement of Christ and of brotherly love." In 1839, at Chambersburg, the General Synod had censured both the Franckean and Tennessee Synods as the two extremes "causing disturbances and divisions in our churches," and standing in the way of the union advocated by the General Synod. (*Proceedings*, 17.) In 1857, however, in order to pave the way for a union with the Franckean Synod, Synod rescinded its action of 1839 as "not in accordance with the spirit of our constitution, and not the sentiment of this convention," thus indirectly declaring its willingness to receive both, the most radical and the most orthodox of Lutheran synods. (25.) And in 1864, at York, after protracted debates and subsequent to the declaration on the part of the Franckean delegates that they fully understood that in adopting the constitution of the General Synod they were adopting its doctrinal position, *viz.*, "that the fundamental truths of the Word of God are taught in a manner substantially correct in the Augsburg Confession," the following resolution was carried, with 97 against 40 votes: "Resolved, That the Franckean Synod is hereby received into connection with the General Synod, with the understanding that said Synod, at its next meeting, declare, in an official manner, its adoption of the doctrinal articles of the Augsburg Confession as a substantially correct exhibition of the fundamental doctrines of the Word of God." The credentials of the delegates were then presented and their names entered upon the roll of Synod (12. 17. 18. 19. 23. 41.) Abolition of the "Declaration" was not demanded. (*L. u. W.* 1864, 283.) Majority men argued: Recognition of the Augsburg Confession was not required in order to unite with the General Synod; the principle excluding the Franckean Synod necessitated the expulsion also

of the Platform synods; it was destructive of the General Synod itself, because its original constitution did not refer to the Augsburg Confession (*L. u. W.* 1864, 187.) The minority, among whom the delegates of the Pennsylvania Synod were prominent, protested against the admission of the Franckean Synod, declaring "that by this action of the General Synod its constitution has been sadly, lamentably violated." And when Synod refused to reconsider her action, the Pennsylvania delegates, appealing to the conditions upon which they had reentered the General Synod in 1853, publicly declared their withdrawal. At Fort Wayne, 1866, the General Synod "resolved, That, inasmuch as the Franckean Synod has complied with the condition of admission laid down by the last General Synod, its delegation be received" (17.) In the same year, however, the Western Conference of the Franckean Synod had organized as "Mission Synod of the West" in order to "Americanize" Lutherans in Iowa, Minnesota, etc. Rev. Fair, a member of this synod, wrote: For what is it (the Augsburg Confession) but a bit of paper and ink, containing, indeed, some good truths, but likewise also virulent errors; therefore let it go where finally all error must go — to hell. (*L. u. W.* 1866, 380 f ) The fifth article of the Incorporation Charter of the "Mission Synod of the West" provided that, since the Augsburg Confession taught regeneration by Baptism, the bodily presence of Christ in the Lord's Supper, private confession and absolution, and rejected the divine institution and obligation of the Christian Sabbath, ministers who were in favor of subscribing to the Augustana as a test of membership, etc., should not be received into Synod, nor employed as teachers in its colleges or as ministers in its congregations. As its doctrinal basis the Mission Synod adopted the "Declaration of Faith" of the Franckean Synod as containing all fundamental doctrines of the Word of God, all that is truly evangelical in the Augsburg Confession. This radical attitude was criticized by the *Observer*, not, however, as false, but as too open, unguarded, and unwise (*L. u. W.* 1866, 199 f ) At Fort Wayne, 1866, the General Synod advised the Franckean Synod "to dissolve the distant Mission Synod of the West, and direct the ministers now composing it to apply for admission to those synods within whose bounds they may reside"; its radical confessional atti-

tude, however, was not criticized (35.) As late as 1899 A. S. Hardy wrote concerning the Franckean Synod. "Both her 'Declaration of Faith' and practise [revivalism] discloses naught but a firm Lutheran position, though of Pietistic type" (*Luth. Cycl.*, 480) Self-evidently, the admission of the Franckean Synod was generally regarded as a further victory of the liberal element of the General Synod over the conservatives.

**70. York Amendment.** — After the General Synod, at York, had passed the resolution to receive the Franckean Synod, 28 delegates entered a protest against this action as being in violation of the constitution, and the delegates of the Pennsylvania Synod declared their withdrawal. Yet the admission of the Franckean Synod was not reconsidered. But in order to satisfy the conservatives, and to obviate further disintegration, the victorious liberals, realizing the seriousness of the crisis, consented to amend the constitution and to adopt the Pittsburgh resolution of 1856 on the alleged errors in the Augustana. Accordingly, Art. III, Sec. 3, adopted 1835, was amended as follows: "All regularly constituted Lutheran synods not now in connection with the General Synod, receiving and holding, with the Evangelical Lutheran Church of our fathers, the Word of God, as contained in the canonical Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments, as the only infallible rule of faith and practise, and the Augsburg Confession as a correct exhibition of the fundamental doctrines of the Divine Word and of the faith of our Church, founded upon that Word, may at any time become associated with the General Synod by complying with the requisitions of this constitution and sending delegates to its convention according to the ratio specified in Article II." (*Proceedings* 1864, 39.) This amendment, constitutionally adopted 1869 in Washington, D. C., remained the confessional formula till 1913, when, at Atchison, Kans., it was supplanted by the present doctrinal basis. Inasmuch as it canceled both the former limitation to the twenty-one doctrinal articles and the phrase "in a manner substantially correct," the York Amendment was an improvement on the General Synod's basis. Yet the formula was left ambiguous, because the question was not decided whether all of

the articles of the Augsburg Confession were to be regarded as fundamental doctrines of the Bible. The facts are: 1. While, indeed, all doctrines of the Augsburg Confession are Scriptural, not all of them, *e g.*, the doctrine of the Sunday, are fundamental doctrines of the Bible 2 The leading men of the General Synod, after as well as before 1864, declined to accept even all of the twenty-one doctrinal articles as Scriptural and fundamental. 3. After as well as before 1864 they justified their deviations by referring to, and interpreting, the phrase "fundamental doctrines" as a limitation of their subscription to the Augsburg Confession. Dr. Spaeth: "Again and again it was openly declared that a strict and faithful adherence to the Confession, as fundamental in all its doctrinal statements, was 'irrational, unscriptural, and un-Lutherian' (*Luth. Observer*, Nov 17, 1865 ) The demand was made that Lutherans should no longer insist upon such points as fundamental 'about which the ablest theologians and most devout Christians have not been entirely agreed. . . . Sooner than yield on this point we would see the Church perish.' (*Lutheran Observer*, Dec. 1, 1865.)" (2, 113.)

**71. York Resolution.** — Granting that the York Amendment, in a measure, marked a step forward, the so-called York Resolution, quoted above, was more than a step backward. It neutralized the Amendment, and practically identified Synod with the theology of the Platform. Indirectly it rejected the Lutheran doctrines of the real presence, absolution, and the Sabbath. In brief, the York convention had betrayed the cause of Lutheran confessionalism — a fact which only very gradually dawned on the conservatives. Dr Spaeth, quoting Krauth of September 10, 1868, who in the *Lutheran and Missionary*, April 14, 1864, a month prior to the convention of the General Synod in York, had declared that the Eleventh Article of the Augsburg Confession "is not fundamental, and never has been so regarded by the Lutheran Church, in any part of the world," says: "The Pennsylvania Synod, with that charity [blindness] which believeth all things, regarded the subsequent resolutions of the General Synod [at York] professedly in vindication of the Augsburg Confession as earnest and the token of a better mind. Taken in the meaning of those who offered them, they

would have been [?] such a token. The after-events showed that they were designed by the majority as an adroit piece of thimble-rig. Passed in their earliest form in the Pittsburgh Synod to counteract the Definite Platform [but not its theology], these resolutions were so modified [the changes are of no theological import] by the General Synod as to be, in the sense it put into them [historically no other sense was possible], the Definite Platform itself in a new form. Their representative men had made a 'Recension' of the Augsburg Confession, which made it mean everything it did not mean; and now the General Synod, moved largely by the lobby influence which was the power behind the throne, mightier than the throne itself, made a recension of the Pittsburgh resolutions, which commuted [?] them into the poison to which they had originally been [?] the antidote." (2, 138.) While the Amendment apparently gratified and conciliated the conservatives, also those of the Pennsylvania Synod, the York Resolution more than satisfied the liberals. Dr. Spaeth: "The *Lutheran Observer* greeted the action of the General Synod on the last day of its convention in an enthusiastic editorial: 'Now we know where we stand, and there is no longer room for controversy and the personal abuse of intolerant exclusionists. We all stand on the Augsburg Confession, with the qualifications and moral restrictions defined in the accompanying resolutions, so that we are true Lutherans . . . without hyperorthodoxy and exclusivism on the one hand or radicalism on the other.' And even the Pennsylvania Synod looked upon the action of the General Synod as the indication 'of an earnest desire to stand firmly and faithfully upon the true basis of the Evangelical Lutheran Church, and to prevent forever the reception of any synod which could not and would not stand upon this basis.'" (134.) Even such out-and-out Reformed theologians as Schmucker, Kurtz, Brown, Butler, etc., did not find the York Amendment and Resolution too narrow. (*L. u. W.* 1909, 91.) The General Synod, they maintained, adopted the Augsburg Confession "as to fundamentals," the doctrines held in common by all Evangelical denominations. "We repeat, this received the unanimous sanction of the General Synod," Dr. Brown

declared in his pamphlet "The General Synod and Her As-sailants" (13.) Rejecting the position adopted 1865 by the Pennsylvania Synod that "all the doctrinal articles of the Augsburg Confession do set forth fundamental doctrines of Holy Scripture," J. A. Brown continues: "The General Synod does not now seek, nor has she ever sought, to magnify non-essential doctrines, or to make of chief importance those matters in which she differs from other orthodox" (non-Unitarian) "denominations; but has aimed at a catholic Lutheranism that might embrace the various portions of the Lutheran Church in the land, willing to unite on such a basis, and also bring her into cordial and active cooperation with other evangelical churches in the great work of extending the Redeemer's kingdom. To this her constitution binds her, and she can only become narrow and exclusive by disregarding the very law of her own existence" (21.) In order to prepare the General Synod for its indifferentistic attitude, the *Lutheran Observer* had suggested, prior to the convention at York, that an unconditional armistice be declared for fifteen years, or that the questions be discussed on the basis of Scripture only, to the exclusion of the symbols. "We are all sufficiently Lutheran," declared the *Observer*. Not a word, said he, should be spoken, calculated to offend any brother. In lecture-rooms and periodicals doctrinal questions might be ventilated. "But," the *Observer* continued, "keep controversies out of the General Synod! Let this synod in truth be a bond of unity on its old liberal basis, which is broad enough, Scriptural enough, and Lutheran enough for the whole Church of this country to rest upon. We need no better one than the good old basis. We need brotherly love and harmony, and brotherly comity, and the Spirit of the Lord in our approaching convention at York. The sacramental questions are sufficiently discussed in printed books." (*L. u. W.* 1864, 124.) Thus the General Synod, at the conventions subsequent to the publication of the Definite Platform, notably the convention at York, 1864, had once again, by applying its old principle of agreeing to disagree and unionistically reconciling contradictories, apparently succeeded in keeping them all in the fold, conservatives as well as liberals.

**SECESSIONS AND SEPARATIONS.**

**72. Southern Synods Withdrawing.** — One of the arguments advanced against confessionalism was that synods subscribing to all of the Lutheran symbols neither agreed in doctrine, nor succeeded in effecting a union. But did her unionistic principle enable the General Synod to steer clear of dissensions? In 1860 the General Synod embraced two-thirds of the Lutheran Church in America: 864 out of 1,313 pastors, and 164,000 out of 235,000 communicants. But the following decade completely shattered her dream of a Pan-Lutheran union. In 1868 the General Synod reported 590 ministers and 86,198 communicants — hardly one-fourth of the Lutherans then in America. At a convention in Chicago, May 7, 1860, the Swedes and Norwegians severed their connections with the District Synod of Northern Illinois. The rupture was the direct result of the admittance of the Melancthon Synod in 1859, which the Scandinavians regarded as a fateful victory of the Platform men. In the preambles of their resolution of withdrawal the seceders state: "Whereas we are fully convinced that there is a decided doctrinal difference in our synod; and whereas there in reality already exists a disunion, instead of union, in the synod; and whereas strife and contention tend to destroy confidence, and to weaken our hands and retard our progress; and whereas we are liable at any time, by an accidental majority of votes against our doctrinal position, to have a change forced upon us; and whereas it is our highest duty to maintain and preserve un-mutilated our confession of faith, both in our congregations and in the theological instruction imparted to, and the influence brought to bear upon, our students, who are to be the future ministers and pastors of our congregations; and whereas our experience clearly demonstrates to us that we cannot be sure of this, in the relations we have heretofore sustained" (Jacobs, 449.) The Scandinavians were followed by the Synods of the South. At Lancaster, May, 1862, the General Synod passed and, by a committee, presented to President Lincoln resolutions respecting the Rebellion. Among them were the following: "Resolved, That it is the deliberate judgment of this Synod that the rebellion against the constitutional Government of this land is most wicked in its inception, unjusti-

fiable in its cause, unnatural in its character, inhuman in its prosecution, oppressive in its aims, and destructive in its results to the highest interests of morality and religion." "Resolved, That we deeply sympathize with all loyal citizens and Christian patriots in the rebellious portions of our country, and we cordially invite their cooperation, in offering united supplications at a Throne of Grace, that God would restore peace to our distracted country, reestablish fraternal relations between all the States, and make our land, in all time to come, the asylum of the oppressed and the permanent abode of liberty and religion." (30.) Two further resolutions were added with special reference to the Southern Lutherans: "Resolved, That this Synod cannot but express its most decided disapprobation of the course of these synods and ministers, heretofore connected with this body, in the open sympathy and active cooperation which they have given to the cause of treason and insurrection." "Resolved, That we deeply sympathize with our people in the Southern States, who, maintaining their proper Christian loyalty, have in consequence been compelled to suffer persecution and wrong, and we hail with pleasure the near approach of their deliverance and restoration to our Christian and ecclesiastical fellowship" (31 ) As these resolutions practically amounted to an expulsion, the five Southern synods felt justified in withdrawing and organizing, at Concord, N. C., May 20, 1863, "The General Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in the Confederate States of America." In 1869 the General Synod appointed a committee to correspond with the Southern synods on the propriety of returning to their former connection. (64.) And in 1877 Synod declared: "The action of former General Synods was not intended to compromise the Christian character of the ministers and churches of the General Synod South, and is not so interpreted by us; and if there be anything found therein that can rightfully be so construed (*i. e.*, as compromising the Christian character of said ministers and churches), we hereby place upon record our belief that such is not the sentiment of this body." (27.) The result was mutual acknowledgment and an exchange of fraternal delegates.

**73. The Fort Wayne Rupture.** — The last and, by far, severest blow, the separation of the synods which afterwards

organized as the General Council, came as an aftermath of the admission of the Franckean Synod and the consequent withdrawal of the Pennsylvania delegation, in 1864, which the General Synod construed as the act of the Ministerium of Pennsylvania. However, since the Ministerium, reassured by the adoption of the York Amendment and Resolution, had already resolved to maintain its connection and to send a delegation to the next convention of the General Synod, the Fort Wayne schism could have been averted. And probably the break would have been avoided if the hasty establishment of the Philadelphia Seminary (as such, an act altogether justified, especially in the interest of the growing German element) had not caused suspicion and chagrin within the General Synod. As it was, the resolution of the Pennsylvania Synod, May 25, 1864, at Pottstown, to establish a new seminary at Philadelphia, and the subsequent election, on July 27, of Drs. C. F. Schaeffer of Gettysburg, W. J. Mann, and C. P. Krauth as the first faculty, was generally viewed as the first actual step toward a breach. According to Dr. Jacobs both the establishment of the Philadelphia Seminary and the subsequent disruption of the General Synod would probably have been avoided, "if the chair at Gettysburg, vacated by the resignation of Dr. S. S. Schmucker, had been filled by his [Charles Porterfield Krauth's instead of J. A. Brown's] election." (462) Howbeit, at its convention in Fort Wayne, May, 1866, President S. Sprecher ruled that Synod could recognize the Pennsylvania delegation only after receiving the report of an act on the part of the Pennsylvania Synod reestablishing its relation to the General Synod. In spite of vigorous protests on the part of the Pennsylvania and other delegates, the chair in its ruling was supported by the majority of the convention. After a good deal of parliamentary fencing and quibbling, Synod adopted, with a vote of 77 to 32, as the "ultimate resolution": "Resolved, That after hearing the response of the delegates of the Pennsylvania Synod, we cannot conscientiously recede from the action adopted by this body, believing, after full and careful deliberation, said action to have been regular and constitutional; but that we reaffirm our readiness to receive the delegates of said Synod as soon as they present their credentials in due form." (*Proceedings* 1866, 3. 5. 9. 12. 25 ff.) Of the

alternatives, either practically applying for readmission or withdrawing from the convention, the Pennsylvania delegation chose the latter course. At the same time they stated "that in retiring, as they now do, they distinctly declare that this their act in no sense or degree affects the relations of the Pennsylvania Synod to the General Synod." (28.) President A. J. Brown replied in behalf of the General Synod: "This body has not decided at any time that the Pennsylvania Synod was out of the General Synod. But having by its delegation openly withdrawn from the sessions of the General Synod, at York, Pa., the former President [Sprecher] ruled that the practical relation of the Synod of Pennsylvania to the General Synod was such that no report could be heard from that Synod until the General Synod was organized. . . . The General Synod hereby extend to the delegation from the Synod of Pennsylvania the assurance of its kindest regard" (28) "The die was cast," says E. J. Wolf. "The prospect of a general Evangelical Lutheran organization in this country was dispelled." (369.) A few weeks afterward the Ministerium of Pennsylvania declared its connection with the General Synod dissolved. The New York Ministerium, the Pittsburgh Synod, the English Synod of Ohio, and the synods of Illinois, Minnesota, and Texas followed suit. In 1873 the General Synod, on motion of Dr. Morris, proposed an interchange of delegates to the General Council. The Council proposed, instead, a colloquium — a proposition which was accepted by the General Synod South, but declined by the General Synod in 1875. The Lutheran Diets held in 1877 and 1878 at Philadelphia, though temporarily barren of results, helped to pave the way for the General Synod's revision of its doctrinal basis and the subsequent establishment of fraternal relations and interchange of delegates between the two general bodies.

**74. Subsequent Separations.** — Within the seceding synods the Fort Wayne rupture also led to various internal separations. A number of English pastors and congregations, in 1867, severed their connection with the New York Ministerium (leaving it an almost exclusively German body) and formed the New York Synod which, in turn, joined the General Synod. In the same year ten ministers and seven laymen withdrew

from the Pittsburgh Synod, on the ground that, in adopting the Principles of the General Council, Synod had violated its constitution. The receding party claimed the name of the Synod, and as such was recognized by the General Synod. A minority of the Illinois Synod organized the Central Illinois Synod, which also united with the General Synod. The Pennsylvania Ministerium, too, lost some of its pastors and congregations, which united with the East Pennsylvania Synod, a member of the General Synod. The Central Pennsylvania Synod received a few Pennsylvania Ministerium congregations. On the other hand, pastors and congregations in Philadelphia and the neighborhood, hitherto belonging to the East Pennsylvania Synod, united with the Ministerium of Pennsylvania. The English Church at Fort Wayne, in which the battle of 1866 had been fought, entered the Pittsburgh Synod of the General Council. Other congregations in various parts of the country united with other synods of the Council. Some congregations were divided, one portion remaining with the Council, the other entering the General Synod and *vice versa*, while law suits were carried on by rival claimants for the property. (Ochsenford, *Doc. History*, 166.)

**75. Causes of Disruption.** — Though not publicly advanced and pressed at Fort Wayne, the ultimate reason of the separation was the growing confessional trend within the Pennsylvania and New York Ministeriums and other synods over against the confessional and doctrinal laxism of the leaders and the majority of the General Synod. In 1853, when the Pennsylvania Synod reunited with the General Synod, the former body resolved that, "should the General Synod violate its constitution and require of our synod assent to anything conflicting with the old and long-established faith of the Evangelical Lutheran Church, then our delegates are hereby required to protest against such action, to withdraw from its sessions, and to report to this body." (*Minutes of Penn. Synod* 1853, 18.) For confessional reasons the entire Pennsylvania delegation in 1859 voted against the admission of the liberal Melancthon Synod which succored the Platform men. After the admission, at York, 1864, of the un-Lutheran Franckean Synod in spite of the protest of 28 representatives of various

synods, the Pennsylvania delegation, referring to the resolution of 1853, submitted a paper in which they declared that, since the terms upon which the Franckean Synod was admitted were in direct violation of the constitution of the General Synod, they would withdraw in order to report to their synod. (*Proceedings* 1864, 25.) In the same year the Pennsylvania Synod approved of the action of their delegates. In 1865 she resolved, "That, in our judgment, all the doctrinal articles of the Augsburg Confession do set forth fundamental doctrines of Holy Scripture." At the same time she reaffirmed her resolution of 1853, but, being reassured by the adoption of the York Amendment and Resolution, decided to maintain her connection and send a delegation to the convention of the General Synod at Fort Wayne. Accordingly, at Fort Wayne, the Pennsylvania delegates advanced no further scruples respecting the admittance of the Franckean Synod, and declared themselves satisfied with the doctrinal basis of the General Synod. In his pamphlet "The General Synod and Her Assailants," J. A. Brown says: "At Fort Wayne and on the floor of the General Synod it was repeated, again and again, that there were no doctrinal difficulties between the Synod of Pennsylvania and the General Synod, that all were now satisfied with the doctrinal position of the General Synod. It was declared to be entirely a question of order." (11.) Yet back of the diplomatic technicalities and parliamentary fencing were the conflicting principles of governmental centralization *versus* independence of the District Synods, and especially of liberalism *versus* confessionalism. And although the subsequent separation did not proceed on purely confessional and doctrinal lines, the bulk of the conservatives, including practically all truly Lutheran conservatives, went with the seceders, while the great majority of the liberals remained in the General Synod. (*L. u. W.* 1868, 95.) In its issue of January 30, 1868, the *American Lutheran* commented: "Now that the symbolistic element has been eliminated from the General Synod, for which we may thank God, we are enabled to speak and write our peculiarly American Lutheran thoughts without having to fear that we offend those who never were in agreement with us. Our unfortunate York Compromise with our symbolistic brethren failed, like all compromises." (*L. u. W.* 1868, 95.)

## INFLUENTIAL THEOLOGIANS.

76. Dr. Samuel Simon Schmucker. — That the actual doctrinal position of the General Synod, especially during the first half of its history, was much lower than its official confessional formulas would lead one to believe, appears from a glance at some of the most prominent men of this period. S. S. Schmucker (1799—1873), the author of 44 books and pamphlets, and perhaps the most influential man of the General Synod, was not merely a unionistic, but a pronounced Reformed theologian, rejecting and denouncing all doctrines distinctive of Lutheranism, as shown in the preceding pages of this history. He was a scholar of Helmuth, and finished his theological studies at Princeton, 1818—1820. From 1820 to 1826 he was active in pastoral work at New Market, Va.; and from 1826 to 1864 he filled the chair of Didactic Theology at Gettysburg, training about 400 men. After his resignation in 1864 till the end of his life, in 1873, he devoted himself to authorship. His first larger publication was a translation of Storr and Platt's *Biblical Theology*. His *Popular Theology* appeared 1834 and passed through eight editions. Schmucker also was the author of most of the General Synod's organic documents, as the constitution and the formula of government and discipline for its synods and churches, the constitution of the theological seminary, etc. In London, 1846, at the organization of the Evangelical Alliance by Dr. Chalmers, Schmucker, because of his "Appeal" written in 1831, was lauded by Dr. King of Ireland as the "Father" of the Evangelical Alliance. The nine articles adopted by the Alliance were regarded by Schmucker as a sufficient basis for a union of Evangelical Christendom. They formed the standard according to which he revised the Augsburg Confession in the Definite Platform of 1855, which "alienated from him many former friends and clouded the evening of his days." (*Luth. Cycl.*, 433.) According to the Memorial of the convention of the General Synod in 1875, Schmucker is to be remembered as "the first professor of theology in the Theological Seminary of the General Synod, a chair filled by him with distinguished ability for nearly forty years; a man most successful in the work of organization, whose wisdom, energy, and devotion to the Church contributed

most largely to the development of the General Synod, to the founding of her literary and theological institutions, and the organization of her benevolent societies." (41 )

77. **Dr. Benjamin Kurtz.** — Shoulder to shoulder with Schmucker stood B. Kurtz (1795—1865). He studied theology under G. Lochman; was assistant pastor to his uncle, J. Daniel Kurtz, at Baltimore in 1815; pastor at Hagerstown, Md., from 1815 to 1831; at Chambersburg, Pa., from 1831 to 1833; editor of the *Lutheran Observer* from 1833 to 1861. His book *Why You Are a Lutheran* had a wide circulation. In 1841, at Baltimore, Kurtz was appointed by the General Synod to write a "judiciously written life of Luther," which, however, though later committed to Reynolds, never appeared. In most enthusiastic manner Kurtz pleaded the cause of the General Synod, not only in America, but also in Europe, where he succeeded in collecting \$12,000 for the Gettysburg Seminary. (*Proceedings* 1827, 29.) In the *Observer* of July 3, 1857, Kurtz made the following confession: Originally he, too, had endeavored to teach "on the benefit of the Sacrament" in complete accordance with the symbolical books; later, when such was no longer possible to him, he had explained his own faith into the Catechism; this becoming a burden to his conscience, he had been on the point of joining the Presbyterians or Methodists; his older colleagues, however, had held him back from taking this step; they had advised him not to be troubled about such matters, as the Lutheran Church was far too liberal and generous to insist on agreement with the symbols on minor matters, and that without compunction they themselves deviated in various points from the Confessions farther than he did, it being sufficient to adhere to the great fundamental doctrines; this advice had suddenly given comfort to his heart and made the Lutheran Church dearer to him than before; and ever since he had boldly told his catechumens that he did not believe what the Catechism teaches of Baptism and the Lord's Supper, etc. Thus Kurtz's Lutheranism, like that of Schmucker's, deteriorated as the years rolled on. Kurtz was a fiery advocate of "new measures," revivals, protracted meetings, Sabbath- and temperance-reform, etc., and an ardent champion of "American Lutheranism" and the Definite Plat-

form He violently opposed every effort at Lutheranizing and confessionalizing the General Synod. Through the *Lutheran Observer* he wielded a tremendous influence, weekly filling it with ferocious attacks on the Lutheran symbols and the "symbolists" who opposed the Reformed theology of Schmucker and his compeers, and ridiculing in the coarsest fashion everything distinctive of true and historic Lutheranism. In its issue of November 23, 1849, Kurtz wrote, revealing the spirit that moved him: "The Fathers — who are the 'Fathers'? They are the children; they lived in the infancy of the Church, in the early dawn of the Gospel-day. John was the greatest among the prophets, and yet he that was the least in the kingdom of God, in the Christian Church, was greater than he. He probably knew less, and that little less distinctly, than a Sunday-school child, ten years of age, in the present day. Even the Apostle Peter, after all the personal instruction of Christ, could not expand his views sufficiently to learn that the Gospel was to be preached to the Gentiles, and that the Church of Christ was to compass the whole world. A special miracle was wrought to remove his prejudice and convince him of his folly. Every well-instructed Sunday-school child understands this thing, without a miracle, better than Peter did. Who, then, are the 'Fathers'? They have become the Children; they were the Fathers compared with those who lived in the infancy of the Jewish dispensation; but, compared with the present and advanced age, they are the Children, and the learned and pious of the nineteenth century are the Fathers. We are three hundred years older than Luther and his noble coadjutors, and eighteen hundred years older than the primitives; theirs was the age of infancy and adolescence, and ours that of full-grown, adult manhood. They were the Children; we are the Fathers; the tables are turned." Down to its merger in 1915 with the *Lutheran Church Work*, the *Observer* has always borne the stamp of Kurtz's Reformed and Methodist theology, as well as of his fanatical and Puritanic spirit. In 1858 Kurtz founded *The Mission Institute*, which was declared to be non-sectarian (*L. u. W.* 1858, 351.) In 1862 he wrote: "With the editor of the *Lutheran* I am an admirer of the Augsburg Confession, but he must allow me to interpret it for myself, as I allow him." (*L. u. W.* 1862, 152.) Kurtz

and the *Observer* were never censured by the General Synod. Moreover, in 1866, at Fort Wayne, Synod resolved, in memory of B. Kurtz, "that by this afflicting dispensation the Lutheran Church has lost one of her oldest, most faithful, and successful ministers; the General Synod, one of her earliest, ablest, and most constant defenders; and the cause of Protestantism and Evangelical piety in our country, one of its most enlightened and fearless advocates." (37.)

78. Dr. Samuel Sprecher (1810—1905) was the brother-in-law and most devoted and enthusiastic supporter of Schmucker. From 1849 to 1884 he was president of Wittenberg College in Springfield, O., which was most advanced in the advocacy and development of Schmucker's brand of American Lutheranism. Again and again Sprecher urged the necessity of making a bold and honest statement setting forth the exact tenets of American Lutheranism. "I do not see," he said, "how we can do otherwise than adopt the symbols of the Church, or form a new symbol, which shall embrace all that is fundamental to Christianity in them, rejecting what is unscriptural, and supplying what is defective." (Spaeth, 1, 347.) Determined in his blind opposition to "symbolism," Sprecher insisted that the General Synod refuse admission to such as adhered to the Lutheran symbols and their doctrines, and declined to subscribe to the Platform. In 1858 the *Religious Telescope* said in praise of Sprecher: "He is a Bible-Lutheran and does not cram the heads of his students with baptismal regeneration nonsense and similar semipapal imbecilities." (*Observer*, Feb. 25, 1858; *L. u. W.* 1858, 126.) Toward the end of his life Sprecher receded from his former position. In the *Lutheran Evangelist*, January 15, 1892, he wrote: "I can now say, as I could not formerly, that, like Spener, I can for myself accept the symbols of the Church without reserve. . . . It is true that I did once think 'The Definite Synodical Platform' (that modification of Lutheranism which perhaps has been properly called 'the culmination of Melancthonianism') desirable and practicable, and that I now regard all such modifications of our creed as hopeless. In the mean time an increased knowledge of the spirit, methods, and literature of the Missouri Synod has convinced me that such alterations are

undesirable, that the elements of true Pietism, that a sense of the necessity of personal religion, and the importance of personal assurance of salvation, can be maintained in connection with a Lutheranism modified 'by the Puritan element.'" (Jacobs, 369; Neve, 113 ) In 1906 the *Observer* remarked: "It was Sprecher's fear that true evangelical piety and the certainty of faith could not be maintained so well under a strict orthodoxy that made him hesitate to embrace all of the symbolical books of the Lutheran Church in his system of faith. . . This was one of the effects upon him of the New England theology with which he came in contact largely in his early life" (*L. u. W.* 1906, 277 ) But even after his manly retraction Sprecher was not completely cured of the virus of Reformed subjectivism. Sprecher was among the first who, within the General Synod, declared that "inspiration does not make a book free of . . grammatical errors, rhetorical faults, and historical inaccuracies in minor and secondary matters." (*L. u. W.* 1871, 126 )

79. Dr. James Allen Brown. — Brown, born 1821, was licensed in 1845 by the Maryland Synod; served as pastor in various congregations; as professor of theology in Newberry College, S. C., from 1859 to 1860; as chaplain in the U. S. Army; as professor of Systematic Theology at Gettysburg from 1864 to 1879; as editor of the *Lutheran Quarterly* from 1871; insane since 1880, he died June 19, 1882. During the Platform controversy Brown was a zealous opponent of Schmucker and regarded as a conservative. In the *Evangelical Review* he charged Schmucker with teaching false doctrines concerning regeneration, justification, and inherited sin. Articles against Brown appeared in the *Observer* and in the *Evangelical Review*. (*L. u. W.* 1858, 65.) Though an opponent of Schmucker, Brown shared practically all of his peculiarly Reformed and unionistic views. "To separate her from the great multitude of God's sacramental host, degrades the Lutheran Church, the Mother Church of the Reformation," Brown declared in his pamphlet against the assailants of the General Synod. (22.) And when asked, in 1868, in the lawsuit of Hebron Evangelical Lutheran Church in Leechburg: "Do you believe as Professor of Didactic Theology at the Seminary of

the General Synod that the doctrines of the Augsburg Confession agree with Holy Scripture?" Brown answered under oath, "I hold the Augsburg Confession to be a correct exhibition of the fundamental doctrines of the divine Word." Asked again, "Do you believe as such Professor that the Augsburg Confession teaches some things which are not in harmony with the Bible?" he answered, "In certain points there are, according to what appears to be its true and original sense, some things taught in the Augsburg Confession which I do not consider as taught in the Bible or in agreement therewith." Requested to enumerate fundamental doctrines of the Word of God found in the Augsburg Confession to which the constitution of the General Synod referred, he mentioned seven of the twenty-one articles as fundamental, one as not fundamental, and all the others as containing doctrines of fundamental character, but not fundamental in their exact expression. In his pamphlet, "The General Synod and Her Assailants," Brown wrote: The Lutheran Church has its confessions, liturgies, etc., "but she enforces none of them upon her members in the form of rigorous and compulsory law; . . . it does not lie in the genius of our Church to enforce her utterances, in all their details, as if they were indispensable, either to Christianity or herself." (12)

**80. Dr. J. G. Butler and the "Lutheran Evangelist."** — Dr. Butler, pastor of the Lutheran Memorial Church in Washington, D. C., and editor of the *Lutheran Evangelist*, was among the most liberal of the General Synod pastors and in every respect a unionistic-Reformed-Methodistic theologian, who rejected every doctrine distinctive of Lutheranism. (*L. u. W.* 1908, 321.) In 1895 he wrote: "I have become almost entirely indifferent to theological and even to denominational differences of practise and belief." (1895, 251.) In 1899: "The things which separate us [evangelical denominations] are of a speculative nature and have nothing to do with the substance of that faith which saves souls and is the only hope of a lost world." (1899, 124.) At his fiftieth jubilee, in 1899, addresses were delivered by four pastors of the General Synod and seven representatives of other denominations; 250 men "of every creed, denomination, shade of religious faith, and political

opinion" were invited to the banquet (1900, 26.) In 1909 Butler gave the following advice to the Lutheran Church: "Adopt the name American Lutheran, and we may make it one of the stepping-stones toward the union of the entire Church . . . The ideal is not uniformity in doctrine and life, but uniformity in love for Christ and the Kingdom." (1909, 228.) In 1909, after the death of Dr Butler, the *Lutheran Evangelist* was merged with the *Lutheran Observer*. The last number of the *Evangelist* spoke of Butler as "that true prophet of God." And the *Lutheran Observer* said in praise of the *Evangelist*: "It has been a power for good in their [its readers'] lives. Of its records they may well be proud. Founded in 1876, its career of thirty-three years has been one of achievement and honor. It has made a solid and enduring contribution to the developing history of the Lutheran Church in this country" (1909, 562.) Dr. Butler served twice as chaplain in the United States Congress.

81. Dr. J. D. Severinghaus (1834—1905) graduated 1861 in the Seminary at Springfield, O., from 1873 to 1905 he was active in Chicago; in 1869 he founded *Lutherischer Kirchenfreund* (temporarily called *Lutherischer Hausfreund*); in 1875 he published *Denkschrift der Generalsynode*; he established connections with Chrischona, and in 1878 with Pastor C Jensen in Breklum, to prepare candidates for the Wartburg Synod; in 1883 he founded the Chicago Seminary. Severinghaus was one of the most fanatical opponents of Lutheran confessionalism. "The *Kirchenfreund*," he declared, "intends to be genuinely Lutheran, hence not in the sense in which the name after the Reformation was so frequently abused in the interest of a quarrelsome exclusive faction (*Rotte*). In the Lutheran Church there have not only been, and have been tolerated, different opinions on non-essential articles, but it is of the very essence of the true liberty of the Lutheran Church that such differences must be tolerated." (*L. u. W.* 1869, 58.) Severinghaus was an implacable enemy and unscrupulous detractor of Walther and the Missouri Synod. Of his numerous aspersions in the *Kirchenfreund* the following has attracted special attention: "Well, the Missourians are not Quakerish. They believe in fighting, even against their own Government. For

during the time of war they had raised a rebel flag on their Preachers' College in St. Louis, a proof that they intended to tread the Constitution of our country under their feet, in order to enforce their own despotism the more easily." In Dr. Neve's *Kurzgefasste Geschichte* of 1915 Geo Fiitschel writes "Walther sympathized with the South, and even had the Rebellion flag hoisted over the Seminary." (247 ) However, the *Lutheraner* of February 1, 1870, brands "the scribble" of the *Kirchenfreund* as an "infamous slander" and Severinghaus as "a mendacious slanderer." "The truth is"—the *Lutheraner* continues — "that during the time of war never a Rebellion flag, but repeatedly a Union flag was hoisted over our College in St. Louis" (26, 84 150 159; 25, 114. 190.) The General Synod approved of, and repeatedly endorsed, the *Kirchenfreund*. In 1871, at Dayton, O : "The *Kirchenfreund* has also proved that our principles are favorably received by a large portion of our brethren. Outside of our Church the paper is doing a good work in removing prejudices against the General Synod and in defending our principles." (21 ) In 1873, at Canton, O., the Committee on German Church paper reported: "The influence of the paper is seen in many things, but especially in the growing interest in the German work. There no longer can be any doubt that our type of Lutheranism commends itself to the Germans, and that it need but be understood to gain their favor. It is so clear that it needs no proof that the German and English work must go hand in hand in the General Synod The *Kirchenfreund* is doing this twofold work of bringing us into closer sympathy with the Germans, and bringing them into closer union with ourselves" (40 f ; cf 1875, 50.) In 1879, at Wooster, O.: "The *Kirchenfreund* has been published regularly in 24 numbers per year, since the last convention, and our report covers volumes IX and X This has not been the most prosperous period of its history, on the contrary, we are obliged to report a very material loss of subscribers and proportionate diminution of receipts. We believe, however, that this loss is not attributable to any defects of the paper itself, nor to any circumstance whatsoever under our control, but rather to general causes, such as the continued and exhausting depression of the business interests of the country, change in the habits of our people, increase of good secular

papers, and Sunday editions of local papers, westward removal of our people, etc." (37) In the same year, 1879, Severinghaus declared that Missouri showed "all marks of the anti-christ described in the Word of God." (*L. u. W.* 1879, 55.)

**82. Dr. Milton Valentine (1825—1906)**, for nineteen years professor of Dogmatic Theology in Gettysburg, opposed the confessional trend within the General Synod, and, in important distinctive doctrines, occupied a Reformed position. In his *Christian Theology* of 1906, Dr. Valentine sacrifices the inerrancy of the Scriptures in making concessions to modern geology, astronomy, and Evolution. He denies the total depravity of man; charges the Formula of Concord with Flacianism; teaches the humiliation of Christ's divine nature; denies that the divine majesty was communicated to His human nature; and questions the penal suffering of Christ. He teaches that Christ did not pay the full penalty for all sins, for then forgiveness of sin could not be spoken of; Christ's atonement merely made forgiveness possible for God, which followed under the condition that man consents thereto; faith precedes regeneration and conversion, God does not produce the act of faith, but only the ability to believe; the Holy Ghost merely enables man to fulfil the conditions of justification and to convert himself; God restores free choice, but man himself must make the choice and decide in favor of grace; the will of man is the third cause of conversion; children cannot believe, and are saved without faith of their own; Baptism does not work regeneration, heathen are saved if they follow their natural light; in the Eucharist Christ's body and blood are not received orally nor by unbelievers; close communion militates against the unity of the Church; a Church is orthodox so long as it adheres to the fundamental doctrines held in common by all Evangelical communions; deviation in other doctrines is no hindrance to church-fellowship; the government and officers of the State must acknowledge Jesus as Lord and His will as the highest law; legislation must be guided by the Bible; divorces not sanctioned in Scripture may not be granted by the State; the State must enforce the "divine Sabbath"; the Bible teaches a millennium in which the Gospel shall rule supreme, etc. (*L. u. W.* 1908, 128.)

83. Dr. J. W. Richard (1843—1909), professor at Gettysburg since 1889, and editor of the *Lutheran Quarterly* since 1898, occupied practically the same position as Valentine, whose *Christian Theology* he endorsed. In the *Lutheran Quarterly* and the *Lutheran Observer*, as well as in his *Confessional History*, Dr Richard, following Heppe and similar German theologians, defended Melancthonianism, and criticized the Form of Concord, the Second Article of which he branded as Calvinistic. He resisted the efforts on the part of the conservatives and the *Lutheran World* at revising the doctrinal basis of the General Synod, and ignored the confessional resolutions of 1901 and 1905. (*L. u. W.* 1908, 84 ff.; 1909, 179.) Following such German theologians as Dr Hauck and others, Richard distinguished between "form and substance" of the Confessions, in a manner invalidating the subscription to the Augustana, and practically amounting to the old formula: "fundamentals substantially correct" As to the Lord's Supper Richard regarded the declaration, "that Christ is present in the Eucharist," as sufficient. (*Confessional History*, 610—618.) In 1909 Richard identified himself with Schleiermacher's definition of religion, and pronounced this father of modern subjectivism and rationalism "the renewer of theology and the greatest theologian since the Reformation" (*L. u. W.* 1909, 421.)

### CONSERVATIVES.

84. Confessional Tendencies. — Apart from a number of minor causes the conservative movement within the General Synod is chiefly due to the awakening of confessional Lutheranism in Germany, the increase of Lutheran immigrants, and the powerful influence of the Lutherans in the West, especially the Missouri Synod. The rapidly multiplying German elements which entered the Pennsylvania and New York Ministeriums and other Lutheran synods during the second half of the nineteenth century were always farthest advanced in taking a confessional stand with respect to Lutheran doctrine and practise. Down to the present day the attitude of the German Districts of the now defunct General Synod toward lodges, altar- and pulpit-fellowship, and the Lutheran symbols has been much more conservative than that of the English District Synods.

However, the early conservatives of the General Synod, besides being in the minority and having no organ in the English language to cope with the *Lutheran Observer*, lacked the clearness, consistency, boldness, initiative, determination, and aggressiveness of their liberal opponents. And even later, when both their number and courage had increased materially, it was not in every respect the old genuine, but a modified Lutheranism which also their most pronounced representatives advocated — not whole-hearted, undivided loyalty to Lutheran doctrines and practises, but a Lutheranism tainted, more or less, with indifferentism and unionism, nor absolutely free even from elements of Pietism and Reformedism. For the cry of the conservative leaders who later organized the General Council was not, "Back to Luther!" but, "Back to Muhlenberg!" And the prominent conservatives that remained in the General Synod after the Fort Wayne rupture, they all, without exception, were outspoken unionists, ready to tolerate un-Lutheran doctrines in their own midst and pulpit-fellowship with the sects, some of them being disloyal even to doctrines distinctive of Lutheranism. During the Platform controversy some of the most influential conservatives differed from Schmucker not so much in theology as in their policy of mutual toleration and the refusal to mutilate and abandon the venerable Augsburg Confession. The lack of bold aggressiveness on the part of the most Lutheran of these conservatives is illustrated by the letter of H. J. Schmidt, already referred to: "If all open conflict is avoided, our cause, I mean the cause of truth and of the Church, will continue silently and surely to gain ground." (Spaeth, I, 349; *Lutheraner*, April 12, 1852.) Their lack of Lutheran seriousness is exemplified by the cordial relation existing at Gettysburg between C. F. Schaeffer, who in his lectures in Catechetics endeavored to create an interest in, and respect for, the Lutheran symbols, and his brother-in-law S. S. Schmucker, who did everything in his power to discredit and misrepresent them. (*L. u. W.* 1884, 357.)

**85. Conservatives Unionistic.** — In their reports in the *Lutheraner* and in *Kirchliche Mittheilungen* on the confessional awakening within the General Synod, Walther and Sihler

joyfully mention Drs. Morris and Reynolds as the promising leaders of the movement (*Lutheraner* 6, 37.) "An opposition has arisen against Kurtz and Schmucker such as no one would have dared to hope for ten years ago," Loehe wrote in 1850. "Reynolds," he continued, "placed the Confession into the light again. Ministers ask for the wisdom of old. Students at Gettysburg purchase the Book of Concord." The *Evangelical Review* would contribute "to deliver the children of the Church and her teachers out of the Kurtz-Schmuckerian captivity." Similar progress was made in other synods. (*Kirchl. Mitt.* 1850, 57.) In a letter of October, 1847, Philip Schaff refers to Drs. Morris, Reynolds, Demme, and the two Krauths as prominent among the conservatives of the General Synod. (Spaeth, *W. J. Mann*, 38.) But what these men who at the middle of the nineteenth century thrilled many a Lutheran heart with joy and hope abandoned, was, at best, not unionism, but Reformedism. The most that can be said of Dr. C. R. Demme (1795—1863; studied in Halle and Goettingen; came to America in 1818), who was pastor in Philadelphia and prominent in the Pennsylvania Synod, is that he was a theologian of a mild confessional tendency. As late as 1852 he stood for the union distribution formula in the Lord's Supper. Dr. J. G. Morris (1803—1895; received his theological training at Nazareth, Princeton, and Gettysburg; founded the *Lutheran Observer*; wrote *Life Reminiscences of an Old Lutheran Minister*, etc.) signed the notorious letter of 1845, which later he declared to be the greatest blunder of the General Synod. Morris approved of the unionistic practises of the General Synod. As late as 1885 he declared his position as follows: "I preach the Lutheran doctrine of the real presence of our glorified Lord in the blessed elements, but when a poor, penitent, praying, confessing, believing sinner comes and asks for permission to commune with us, I dare not ask him whether his views agree with mine," etc. (*L. u. W.* 1885, 252.) Dr. Charles Philip Krauth (1797—1867; professor in Gettysburg and editor of the *Evangelical Review* from 1850 to 1860), though having a strong aversion to the Platform and being more in favor of a revision of the doctrinal basis of the General Synod than his son, signed the Pacific Overture and, in the Platform controversy, was an ardent advocate of mutual toleration. Dr. Charles Porterfield

Krauth (1823—1883), prior to his manly retraction in 1864, was an out-and-out unionist, and, in more than one respect, infected also with Reformed views. As late as 1866, at Fort Wayne, he was apparently satisfied with the confessional basis of the General Synod as declared in the York Amendment and Resolution. Dr. L. A. Gotwald (1833—1900; professor in Wittenberg Seminary from 1888 to 1895) was, in 1893, charged with, and tried upon, charges, among others, of holding "to the type of Lutheranism characteristic of the General Council," viz., "that all the doctrines of the Augsburg Confession are fundamental," and "that the doctrinal position of the General Synod, when rightly interpreted, is identical with that of the General Council." His acquittal strengthened the conservative, but unionistic, tendency of Wittenberg Seminary. (Jacobs, 510.) Dr. E. J. Wolf (1840—1905; since 1873 professor in Gettysburg Seminary) was perhaps the most Lutheran of the influential English members of the General Synod since the Fort Wayne disruption of 1866. In the Preface to his *Lutherans in America* of 1889 he expresses the conviction with respect to our "glorious Church," "that to know her is to love her, and that those knowing and loving her true character will consecrate themselves to the maintenance of her purity in faith and life, and the enlargement of her efficiency in extending the Word and kingdom of Christ." Dr. D. H. Bauslin, who served the cause of conservatism within the General Synod both as professor in Wittenberg College and as editor of the *Lutheran World* (from 1901 to 1912, when it merged into the *Lutheran Church Work*), was a champion of the unionistic practises of the General Synod. The same is true of other conservatives who contributed to the revision and restatement of the doctrinal basis of the General Synod as finally adopted in 1913 — they all must be classified as unionists, tolerating, on principle, deviations from the doctrines and practises distinctive of Lutheranism. Thus, in the course of years, the unionistic Lutherans multiplied, while the Reformed radicals decreased within the General Synod. In 1896 the *Herold* of the General Council, itself a mildly unionistic paper, wrote: "It is gradually getting better in the General Synod. True, with respect to some old gentlemen the word of 1815 is applicable: 'The old guard dies, but does not surrender.' And the younger

lordlings, who swear by the Methodistic *Lutheran Evangelist*, exercise themselves in crying against the dead orthodoxists. But these as well as the former are no longer strong enough to stop the movement toward the right. 'Toward the right'—that means the General Council, which, strange to say, is more obnoxious to the radicals than Missouri" (*L. u. W.* 1896, 154.)

**86. Dr. William Morton Reynolds.**—Reynolds (1812 to 1875) graduated at Gettysburg Seminary; served as professor in Pennsylvania College from 1833 to 1850; with an interruption of the year 1835 to 1836, when he was pastor at Deerfield, N. J.; was president of Capital University, Columbus, O., from 1850 to 1853, and of Illinois State University at Springfield from 1857 to 1860; joined the Episcopalians in 1863; translated and published Acrelius's *History of New Sweden* in 1874. In 1842 Reynolds left the Ministerium of Pennsylvania and organized the East Pennsylvania Synod. In the interest of conservative Lutheranism, Reynolds, in 1849, founded the *Evangelical Review*, which B. Kurtz promptly condemned as "the most sectarian periodical he ever read." In 1850, when asked whether he intended to adhere to the doctrinal basis of the General Synod, Reynolds stated in the *Lutheran Observer*: "Well, I frankly confess and rejoice in being able to say that within the last two years I have changed my views with respect to several very important points. But this change has not cast me out of the Lutheran Church, but, moreover, led me into it," etc. Reynolds declared that he joyously adopted "old Lutheranism," "as plainly taught in the Augsburg Confession and Luther's Small Catechism" (*Lutheraner*, April 30, 1850). In the *Lutheran Observer* of January 25, 1856, Reynolds retracted his former endorsement of Kurtz's *Why You Are a Lutheran*, a booklet in which Kurtz affirmed that the present Lutheran Church, with a few exceptions, believed concerning the Lord's Supper what had been held by those whom Luther termed "Sacramentarians." (*L. u. W.* 1870, 156.) Walther, in 1850, praised Reynolds as a man of substantial learning and a teacher true to the Lutheran Church and her confessions. (*Lutheraner* 6, 139.) But Walther and other friends of true Lutheranism who staked great hopes on Reynolds, were sorely disappointed in their expectations. In spite of his retractions, Reynolds always was and remained a unionist. In 1857 Harkey

gave the assurance that Reynolds was not a symbolist, but stood on the doctrinal basis of the General Synod. When Dr. G. Diehl, in the *Observer*, designated Reynolds as a strict confessionalist, Reynolds, in the *Observer* of October 2, 1857, protested that he was a General Synod man, whose primary object was not to divide, but to unite. (*L. u. W.* 1857, 314 ) In his Springfield inaugural address, 1858, Reynolds coordinated the evangelical denominations, and advocated extensive unionism, maintaining that they all base their doctrines on Holy Scripture. In order to justify his apostasy, Reynolds, in 1863, published the statement that, in part, he had been moved to unite with the Episcopalians on account of the bitter "sectarianism" of the Lutheran Church and the denunciations of the men of the *Observer* party by the *Lutheran and Missionary*. (*L. u. W.* 1864, 25.) Later Reynolds was reported to have said that he left the Lutheran Church because he was without employment, and believed every door in the General Synod closed against himself. The *Observer* of October 9, 1863, justified the propriety of Reynold's action by referring to the constitution which provides for the honorable dismissal from District Synods and the admittance of ministers from other denominations. (*L. u. W.* 1863, 379.) In 1877 the *Observer* published an article in which the writer states: "When a pastor who depends for his support on his office does not succeed in obtaining a position in our Church and must suffer on account of this, he may accept a call from another denomination. . . . Several of such cases have happened, and no liberal-minded man will censure persons who have left us for such reasons." (*L. u. W.* 1877, 186.)

**87. Conservative Periodicals.** — In 1849 the English Lutherans in New York declared that the *Lutheran Observer* was opposed to the spirit and character of the Lutheran Church, and appointed a committee to bring about a radical change in the editorship, or, in case this should fail, to advocate the establishment of a new church-paper at the next General Synod. "Thus one funeral song after the other is chanted to our friend at Baltimore, and partly by his own former adherents," remarked the *Lutheraner*. (6, 47.) It was but another of the numerous symptoms of awakening confessionalism in the East,

when, at New York, June 8, 1853, a conference of the New York Ministerium, in a resolution, declared that they were utterly dissatisfied with the unevangelical and unsymbolical position of the *Lutheran Observer* as a church-paper, dissatisfied also with the miserable stuff which it contained, and that, in place of it, they recommend the *Lutheran Standard*. (*Lutheraner* 9, 175) — The first German paper within the General Synod which occasionally raised its voice against the apostasy of the *Observer* was the *Lutherische Kirchenzeitung* of Pittsburgh, published from 1838 to 1846 by Prof. Schmidt of Lafayette College, Easton, Pa., at a great personal sacrifice. (*Kirchl Mitt.* 1843, No. 10.) At Chambersburg, 1839, the General Synod resolved "that we continue to view the *Lutheran Observer* published by Dr. Kurtz, at Baltimore, Md., and the *Lutherische Kirchenzeitung*, published by Prof. Schmidt, at Easton, Pa., as able advocates of the cause of evangelical religion in our Church, and that we recommend them to the cordial support of our people." (16.) But the German paper soon proved a thorn in the flesh of the liberals. In 1841 "a Lutheran of Ohio" wrote in the *Kirchenzeitung*: "It is astounding that the Lutheran Church should support a paper like the *Observer* and nurse an enemy in its midst; the editor [Kurtz] himself ought to be honest enough to leave the Church whose doctrines and customs he does not love, but regards as false." Because of this critical attitude the Synod of the West, in the same year, declared that it was unable to recommend the *Kirchenzeitung* to its members. The charges were that the *Kirchenzeitung* was directly opposed to the *Lutheran Observer*; that it revealed an improper spirit with respect to revivals and charitable institutions; that it had declared the *Lutheran Observer* to be anti-Lutheran, and directed its influence against this excellent paper. The Pennsylvania Synod, however, to which Pastor Schmidt submitted the resolution of the Synod of the West, decided in favor of the *Kirchenzeitung*. In 1840, the same year in which the *Mercersburg Review* appeared, the *Evangelical Review* was published at Gettysburg by W. M. Reynolds, whom Charles Philip Krauth succeeded as editor. Both Reynolds and Krauth were prominent among the leaders of the conservatives. What the *Evangelical Review*, however, really stood for was not unqualified Lutheranism, but unionism. (*L. u. W.* 1858, 272 f.) On

principle the *Review* opened its pages to both the advocates and the opponents of the Lutheran symbols and its doctrines. (*Lutheraner* 1852, 136.) Walther's report in the *Lutheraner* on his trip to Germany in the interest of an agreement with Loehe appeared English in the *Evangelical Review* of 1853. (*L* 9, 134 ) The career of the *Evangelical Review* was closed in 1870. It was succeeded by the *Lutheran Quarterly*, first edited by Drs Brown and Valentine, both of whom were not essentially Lutheran, but unionistic and Reformed theologians — In 1845, Dr. W. A. Passavant began a small missionary periodical which grew into a large family weekly, the *Missionary*. Though one of its objects was to oppose the un-Lutheran tendency of the *Observer*, the *Missionary* itself was free neither of unionism nor even of Reformedism. According to its issue of February 28, 1861, for instance, communicants at the Lord's Supper partake of Christ's body and blood by faith. The *Missionary* was a champion also of the Reformed doctrine of the Sunday. (*L. u. W.* 1861, 123 350 ) In 1861 the *Missionary* merged into the *Lutheran and Missionary*, with Drs. Krauth and Passavant as editors — a paper which took a decided stand in favor of a modified confessional Lutheranism. In 1861 the editors declared with respect to pulpit- and altar-fellowship: "We do not want to refuse the sweet bond of Christian fellowship to those who sincerely love our Lord Jesus Christ." (*L. u. W.* 1861, 379; 1862, 19 ff.) The *Lutheran World*, serving the cause of the conservatives till 1912, when it was merged into the *Lutheran Church Work* (established 1911 as the official organ of the General Synod), always defended the unionistic practises of the General Synod, and violently attacked Missouri for disapproving of her fellowship with the sects. (*L. u. W.* 1901, 54; 1904, 564.) In 1901 the *Lutheran World* wrote: "Perhaps we shall always have three great church bodies, lest any truth concerning the Trinity be lost. Perhaps there will always be Calvinists to emphasize the sovereignty of God, Arminians to emphasize the freedom of man and the work of the Holy Spirit, and Lutherans who place the emphasis on God in Christ and justification by faith in Him" (*L. u. W.* 1901, 154.) In 1905 the *World* defended the affiliation of the General Synod with the Federal Council, and attacked the *Lutheran* for criticizing the Federal Council as unionistic.

(*L. u. W.* 1906, 32.) Without a word of criticism the *World*, in 1903, published the news: "Rev. Eli Miller, of St Mark's Church, Allegheny, Pa., recently addressed the I. O. O. F. in his church on 'We be brethren'" (*L. u. W.* 1903, 184) In the same year the *World* designated the doctrine that every word of the Bible was inspired as an orthodox exaggeration and an astonishing assertion, at the same time declaring that it was time to formulate a theory of inspiration, and that, in this matter, all eyes in America were directed on the Lutheran Church. (*L. u. W.* 1904, 39; 1903, 307.) In 1901 the *Lutheran World* wrote that one must not imagine that man cannot do anything toward his own salvation; that grace must not be viewed as such a supernatural operation which effects a change in the moral nature of man while his own exertions contribute nothing; that man must cooperate with God when the machinery is set into motion. (*L. u. W.* 1901, 234.) The *Lutherische Zionsbote*, the organ of the German Nebraska and the Wartburg Synods, as well as of the German congregations in other District Synods, was much more moderate and conservative than its predecessor, the *Lutherische Kirchenfreund*

### MISSOURI'S INFLUENCE.

88. Light Coming from the West. — In 1845, at the convention of the General Synod in Philadelphia, Wyneken, a delegate of the Synod of the West, made a bold, determined, and consistent stand for genuine Lutheranism against the prevailing unionistic and Reformed tendencies of the leaders of the General Synod. Wyneken, who, in his pamphlet *The Distress of the German Lutherans in North America*, had characterized the General Synod as Reformed in doctrine, Methodist in practise, and Lutheran in name only, demanded at Philadelphia that Synod either renounce the name Lutheran, or reject as utterly un-Lutheran Schmucker's *Popular Theology*, *Appeal*, *Portraiture of Lutheranism*, etc., Kurtz's *On Infant Baptism*, *Why You Are a Lutheran*, and the *Lutheran Observer*, as well as the *Hirtenstimme* of Weyl. But on floor of Synod not a single voice was heard that understood him, and was in sympathy with him. On the contrary, in *Lutherische Hirtenstimme*, July 1, 1845, Rev. Weyl began to decry Wyne-

ken as a masked Romanist, an enemy of Lutheran doctrines, usages, books, and periodicals, and to ridicule his zeal for true Lutheranism at Philadelphia as a "ludicrous motion (*spasshafte Motion*)" which the General Synod had tabled "good-naturedly." (*L* 1845, 96, 3, 32; 7, 133. 153.) Wyneken was a strange figure on the floor of the General Synod — without predecessors, without successors. Down to the Merger in 1918 there was not found a single prominent General Synodist walking in his steps. In an address delivered March 10, 1846, Dr. Philip Schaff (Schaaf was his original name) declared that it was impossible to build a confessional Lutheran Church (not to speak of the exclusive Lutheranism of the Form of Concord) on the Reformed English soil of America. It would be easier to direct the course of the Mississippi to Bavaria and to convert the Chinese through German sermons. The emissaries from Germany would soon be convinced of the folly of their undertaking, etc. — This was the view also of the leaders of the General Synod. But, though fully aware of the difficulties ahead, nothing was able to daunt the courage of the men of the West, or shake their faith in the truth and final success of their cause. And their faith did not fail them. Throughout the United States and far beyond its bounds the fact of Missouri's powerful rise was felt as an encouragement and incentive to true Lutheranism everywhere. Indeed, the confessional influence of the West on the East was much greater than is usually acknowledged. As early as 1846 Dr. Walther felt justified in stating in the *Lutheraner* (Sept. 5): "No doubt but God has arisen in order to remove the rubbish under which our precious Evangelical Lutheran Church was buried for a long time, also here in America." (3, 1.) The *Observer*, reporting on the organization of the Missouri Synod in 1847, ridiculed: "This new Synod is composed of genuine Old Lutherans, the true, spotless orthodox ones, whose theology is as strong and straight as the symbolical books can make it, and whose religious usages are as stiff as such thoroughbred old-school men can wish them." (*L*. 4, 30.) But while B. Kurtz and his compeers indulged in mockery and ridicule, the men of Missouri were clear-sighted, serious, and determined. The consequence was that a decade later the hearts of the General Synod's anti-confessionalists were filled with fear and conster-

nation Schmucker's chief object in writing the Definite Platform, as appears from this document itself, was to stem the tide of the confessional wave coming from the West, and to make the General Synod immune against Missouri.

89. Cloud, like the Hand of a Man, in the West. — Admitting the tremendous influence of the Lutherans in the West, the *Observer*, February 19, 1864, wrote, in his usual subjective fashion: "There was a time when our Church had peace. From 1830 to 1840 she enjoyed a universal peace and flourished greatly. This flourishing condition extended far into the following decade. In these days, and already somewhat earlier, the transition from the German into English caused some friction. Nevertheless, it was a time of revivals and of great bloom. The number of our churches increased. Our seminary at Gettysburg was filled with students. . . . Between 1845 and 1850 a change took place with a part of our Church. A little cloud, like the hand of a man, appeared in the West. The Germans came in ever greater multitudes and in more rapid succession. They no longer joined the American Lutheran congregations generally. An Old Lutheran in Bavaria [Loeche] turned his eyes on this country, sending colonies of hyper-Lutherans. These opposed the revivals. Some of them were pious men, but their religious type differed from the American. They were surrounded by influences which hindered their amalgamation with American Christians. They had been imbued with mistrust against the General Synod. Their system was such as not to encourage spiritual life and progress. . . . These children of a foreign soil had been sent over with a bitter prejudice against the liberal Lutheranism of America. In the year 1845 there were probably no more than one or two dozen old-Lutheran congregations in this country. Now there are perhaps no less than 700 symbol-Lutheran congregations of the old school in the country, whose preachers — numbering almost 500 — are all symbol- and hyper-Lutherans who profess to believe that the real body and blood of Christ are orally received in the Lord's Supper, and that the unbelieving communicant as well as the believing partakes of the true body and blood of the Savior. They also believe in regeneration by Baptism, and some of them also in private confession, in exor-

cism, in beautifying the church with pictures and crucifixes; some of them also, in bright daylight, light wax candles at Communion. . . . This German, anti-Biblical, anti-American element could have been checked and absorbed by the American Church if another element had not been added. But during the rise of the great revivals of the fourth decade of this century in our own Church unfortunately a class of people arose who are far more dangerous and more powerful for mischief than the European preachers. These American preachers became disloyal to the basis of the General Synod, and began to raise a banner against the revivals and against a spiritual Lutheranism . . . They began a systematic persecution of the most prominent men of the General Synod. In order to execute their plans, they began to curry favor with the German symbolists. They succeeded in adding tenfold bitterness to the prejudice and suspicion in the hearts of the foreigners, until finally an almost unsurmountable abyss seems to be fastened between the foreign high-church party and our General Synod. . . . Every Lutheran of this country should have endeavored to lead our foreign brethren to the General Synod, showing them that the pure spiritual Lutheranism of this land is so much better than the leather-bound symbolism of the Bavarian autocrat, as our political institutions are better than those of the old Fatherland. But, instead of this work of love, our benighted symbolists have strengthened the prejudices of the foreigners in saying to them that the Lutheranism of the General Synod is a pseudo-Lutheranism." — The origin, then, of the confessional commotion within the Lutheran Church of America must be traced chiefly to such men as Wyneken, Sihler, and especially to Walther, who since 1839 had been zealous in unfurling the banner of true Lutheranism, seriously, determinately, aggressively, victoriously. If the confessional movement was wrong, Missouri, above all, must be condemned as the great disturber of the peace, but Lutheranism itself must go down with it. (*L. u. W.* 1864, 59) The sincerity, seriousness, and determination of the men of Missouri in applying the principles of Lutheranism as they saw it, commanded the admiration even of an opponent like S. S. Schmucker, who wrote in the *Observer*, September 21, 1860: "Would it not reveal a lack of self-respect if the General Synod were to receive

men who seem to believe that she has departed so far from the Lutheran doctrine that she could no further lay any just claim to the name Lutheran? The opposite way of the Missourians is much more honorable and has won the respect not only of the General Synod, but of the Church everywhere." (*L. u. W.* 1860, p. 353 )

**90. Improved Conditions.**—In the issue of the *Lutheran* dated August 31, 1852, Walther declared: "Since the last eight years, conditions have really improved in many respects, and to this end, according to many testimonies which have been made against us, God has used and blessed also our humble testimony." (9, 1.) The enmity which Missouri met everywhere was indeed a significant symptom of conditions changing for the better. It proved that the leaven of "foreign symbolism," as Schmucker pleased to style it, was doing its work. Foremost among the men that witnessed to the powerful influence of Missouri by testifying against her was B Kurtz, who again and again denounced all confessionalists, especially those of the West, as "resurrectionists of elemental, undeveloped, halting, stumbling, and staggering humanity," as priests ready "to immolate bright meridian splendor on the altar of misty, musky dust," men bent on going backward, and consequently, of necessity, going downward! (Spaeth, 1, 344 ) In 1859 the *Observer* wrote: "It is true that there are some small factions who call themselves Lutherans, but they are not of us, and there is no hope that the Missourians, or Buffaloes, and other small communions will ever become wiser in their generation. But it is to be expected that their children and children's children will outgrow the prejudices of their fathers, and become sensible and useful Christians. As said before, we do not regard these factions as Lutherans; they have stolen a part of Luther's livery, but they lack his spirit, and would be disowned by the great Reformer if he were on earth now." (*L. u. W.* 1859, 227.) "The symbolists have forgotten that Luther had a soul, and that they are only quarreling over his old hat, coat, and boots," the *Observer* declared in its issue of April 1, 1864. It was a great shame for them that they made the doctrine concerning the reception of the body and blood of Christ in the Lord's Supper also by the wicked an essential

part of the Lutheran system. "The Lutheran Church of this country," the *Observer* continued, "moving forward gloriously on the basis of the General Synod, had gradually forgotten everything pertaining to the old boots, coats, and hats, until this extreme party [Missouri] rose, gathered the old rags, tied them to a stick, and now calls upon all Lutherans to agree with them on pain of excommunication." (*Kirchl. Mitt.* 1864, 56 ) In May of the following year Dr. Conrad wrote, in a similar strain: "The extreme symbolical standpoint, adopted anew in America and Europe and demanding an unconditional subscription to the whole [doctrinal] content of the Symbolical Books, is historically hyper-Lutheran, essentially schismatic, practically disastrous, and providentially condemned " (*L. u. W.* 1865, 217 ) Referring to Kurtz's tirade on "Luther's old boots," etc., the *Lutheran* remarked: "Is there no one in the General Synod who will call to account such a blasphemous slanderer?" However, it was but the language of a foe who began to realize that defeat was imminent.

### EXPLANATORY STATEMENTS.

91. Resolutions of 1895, 1901, and 1909. — Owing to the efforts of the conservatives in the interest of bringing about a closer union with the General Council and the United Synod in the South, the General Synod passed a number of resolutions affecting its confessional basis: 1895 in Hagerstown, Md.; 1901 in Des Moines, Iowa; 1909 in Richmond, Ind.; 1911 in Washington, D. C.; and 1913 in Atchison, Kans. The resolution adopted at Hagerstown, June 15, 1895, defines the "Unaltered Augsburg Confession as throughout in perfect consistence" with the Word of God. It reads: "Resolved, That in order to remove all fear and misapprehension, this convention of the General Synod hereby expresses its entire satisfaction with the present form of doctrinal basis and confessional subscription, which is the Word of God, the infallible rule of faith and practise, and the Unaltered Augsburg Confession as throughout in perfect consistence with it — nothing more, nothing less." The resolution adopted June 6, 1901, at Des Moines objects to any distinction made between fundamental and non-fundamental doctrines in the Augustana. It reads:

"Resolved, That, in these days of doctrinal unrest in many quarters, we rejoice to find ourselves unshaken in our spiritual and historic faith, and therefore reaffirm our unreserved allegiance to the present basis of the General Synod; and we hold that to make any distinction between fundamental and so-called non-fundamental doctrines in the Augsburg Confession is contrary to that basis as set forth in our formula of confessional subscription" Concerning the other symbols of the Book of Concord the convention at Richmond declared, June 8, 1909: "Resolved, That, inasmuch as the Augsburg Confession is the original, generic confession of the Lutheran Church, accepted by Luther and his coadjutors, and subscribed to by all Lutheran bodies the world over, we therefore deem it an adequate and sufficient standard of Lutheran doctrine In making this statement, however, the General Synod in no wise means to imply that she ignores, rejects, repudiates, or antagonizes the Secondary Symbols of the Book of Concord, nor forbids any of her members from accepting or teaching all of them, in strict accordance with the Lutheran regulating principle of justifying faith On the contrary, she holds those Symbols in high esteem, regards them as a most valuable body of Lutheran belief, explaining and unfolding the doctrines of the Augsburg Confession, and she hereby recommends that they be diligently and faithfully studied by our ministers and laymen." With respect to the phrase in the Amendment of 1864, "the Word of God as contained in the canonical Scriptures," the Richmond convention resolved, "That we herewith declare our adherence to the statement, 'The Bible is the Word of God,' and reject the error implied in the statement, 'The Bible contains the Word of God.'"

**92. Objectionable Features of Resolutions.** — Among the weak points of the resolutions of 1895 and 1901 are the following. First: It implied a contradiction when the General Synod in her new resolutions, which give an unqualified assent to the Augsburg Confession, at the same time declared herself fully satisfied with, reaffirmed and set its seal of approval on, the qualified basis of 1864. From the very outset the leaders of the new confessional movement dodged the open acknowledgment that the doctrinal basis of the General Synod, also that of 1864, was misleading and un-Lutheran. In the

resolution of 1895, Synod expressed her "entire satisfaction" with the doctrinal basis of 1864. In the resolution of 1901 she reaffirmed her "unreserved allegiance" to this basis. In 1909 Synod declared: "We reiterate our firm belief that our confessional basis [of 1864] is adequate and satisfactory." (58.) Again: "The confessional resolutions referred to [of 1895 and 1901] are not alterations of the constitution, and contemplate no alterations; they are simply explanations of the meaning of the General Synod's confessional basis. Therefore, it is not necessary to submit them to the District Synods of the General Synod" (for adoption). (58.) The Report of Dr. L. S. Keyser, delegate to the General Council in 1907, which was adopted by the Richmond convention, urged Synod to defend, vindicate, and maintain her doctrinal basis of 1864. Also the *Lutheran World*, the organ of the conservatives, maintained that the General Synod's resolutions of 1895 to 1909 were but "a re-statement of its confessional basis in harmony with all its previous statements" (*L. u. W.* 1909, 370.) Secondly: When the resolution of 1901 declared it contrary to the basis of 1864 to make any distinction between fundamental and so-called non-fundamental doctrines in the Augsburg Confession, this, too, was an unwarranted assertion. The Richmond convention stated: "When the General Synod says, in her formula of confessional subscription, that she accepts 'the Augsburg Confession as a correct exhibition of the fundamental doctrines of the divine Word, and of the faith of our Church founded upon the Word,' she means precisely what she says, namely, that the fundamental doctrines of God's Word are correctly set forth in the Confession. She does not mean that some of the doctrines set forth in the Confession are non-fundamental, and, therefore, may be accepted or rejected; she means that they are all fundamental, and their exhibition in the Confession is to be accepted by those who subscribe to the Confession." This interpretation placed on the York Amendment by the resolution of 1901 was unknown to the General Synod and her theologians before as well as after its adoption in 1864. As shown above, the phrase "fundamental doctrines" of the York Amendment, historically interpreted, has but one meaning, *viz.*, that some of the doctrines of the Augsburg Confession are fundamental, while others are not. Besides, while it is cer-

tainly correct to regard all doctrines of the Augustana as Scriptural and binding, it is theologically false to declare all of them, *e. g.*, the doctrine of the Sunday, fundamental doctrines. — Thirdly: The convention at Richmond adopted the statement: "While the General Synod's formula of confessional subscription mentions only the Augsburg Confession, without specifying the terms 'altered' or 'unaltered,' yet it is a historical fact that the General Synod has never subscribed to any edition of the Confession save the 'unaltered' form, and does not now subscribe to any other edition." (56.) If this means that the General Synod ever subscribed, *e. g.*, to the rejection in the Tenth Article, an essential feature in the unaltered edition, but omitted in the edition of 1540, the statement is not borne out by the facts. — Fourthly: The resolution of 1909, by stating that every member may accept the Secondary Symbols "in strict accordance with the Lutheran regulating principle of justifying faith" (60), insinuates that these symbols are in need of such an interpretation, thus placing them below par. The self-evident fact that the Secondary Symbols should be tried also according to the Augsburg Confession and the doctrine of justification did not justify a limitation, which could be interpreted as a justification, *e. g.*, of the professors in Gettysburg Seminary, who, from Schmucker down to Richard, maintained that the Secondary Symbols were not in agreement with the Augsburg Confession.

### RESTATEMENT OF BASIS.

93. *Atchison Amendments.* — The resolutions of 1891 to 1909 were not submitted to the District Synods for adoption, nor subsequently embodied in the constitution of the General Synod. Instead, the convention at Richmond, 1909, instructed the Common Service Committee "to codify the several resolutions and statements explanatory of the Doctrinal Basis of the General Synod, adopted at York, Pa., in 1864; at Hagerstown, Md., in 1895; at Des Moines, Iowa, in 1901; and at the present session of the General Synod, and incorporate the substance of the same into one clear and definite statement of our Doctrinal Basis, and to report the same at the next meeting of the General Synod with a view to placing it in the Consti-

tution of the General Synod by amendment in the manner prescribed by the Constitution itself, there being no intention in this action in any way to change our present Doctrinal Basis" of 1864. (115.) Accordingly, two new articles were presented to the assembly in Washington, D. C., 1911, which were subsequently referred to the District Synods for action. The articles submitted for approval read as follows: "Article II. Doctrinal Basis. With the Evangelical Lutheran Church of the Fathers, the General Synod receives and holds the canonical Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments as the Word of God and the only infallible rule of faith and practise; and it receives and holds the Unaltered Augsburg Confession as a correct exhibition of the faith and doctrine of our Church as founded upon the Word. Article III. The Secondary Symbols. While the General Synod regards the Augsburg Confession as a sufficient and altogether adequate doctrinal basis for the cooperation of Lutheran synods, it also recognizes the Apology of the Augsburg Confession, the Smalcald Articles, the Small Catechism of Luther, the Large Catechism of Luther, and the Formula of Concord as expositions of Lutheran doctrine of great historical and interpretative value, and especially commends the Small Catechism as a book of instruction." (*Proceedings* 1913, 126 ) Two years later, all District Synods having approved the articles, the convention at Atchison declared "that the said amendments have been adopted, and are parts of the Constitution of this body." (*L. u. W.* 1916, 6.)

**94. A Stride Forward Officially.** — Considered by themselves, no criticism will be offered by any Lutheran on the new articles embodied in the General Synod's constitution. Even the blemishes still adhering to the resolutions of 1891 and 1909 have disappeared. Specific reference to the York basis of 1864 is omitted; likewise the limitation with reference to the adoption of the Secondary Symbols, etc. True, the new articles contain a confession of the Augustana only, while in our day, also in our country, it is certainly of special import for Lutherans to acknowledge all Lutheran symbols in order to show at the very outset that they occupy a correct position also with respect to the controversies after Luther's death, which, in part, have been revived in our own country. Indeed, the second of

the new articles has been interpreted by some as involving a confession also of the Secondary Articles. But Dr. Singmaster is right in declaring with reference to the new formula: "The General Synod does not require subscription to the Secondary Symbols as a condition to membership in that body. Their formal acceptance is a matter of liberty with the individual synod." However, since the confessional formula of 1913 contains neither a limitation as to the adoption of the Augustana, nor any criticism of the other Lutheran symbols, the present doctrinal basis of the General Synod, as stated in the new articles, must be viewed as satisfactory — *cæteris paribus*. By adopting the Atchison Amendments, the General Synod in reality, at least formally and officially, did not merely reaffirm and reiterate, but corrected and changed its former qualified confessional basis. As it reads, the formula of 1913 is tantamount to a rejection of all former doctrinal deliverances of the General Synod, the resolutions of Synod and asseverations of her theologians to the contrary notwithstanding. Dr. Neve admits as much when he says: "Thus the General Synod took a great stride forward in the direction of confessional correctness. The express mention of the 'Unaltered' Augsburg Confession constitutes an outspoken confession against Melanckthonianism, that is, against the Definite Platform theology, or American Lutheranism. And the removal of the old formula concerning the fundamental doctrines means the removal of an expression which has done much harm in the General Synod." (158.) In part, this progress was a result of the testimony of Walther and the Missouri Synod, whose fidelity to the Lutheran Confessions had been stigmatized for decades by the theologians of the General Synod, even such men as Charles Porterfield Krauth (in 1857), as "rigid symbolism," "German Lutheranism," "deformities of a Pharisaic exclusiveness," etc. Dr. Neve remarks: "The close unity coupled with its size (for Missouri soon became by far the largest synod) exercised a powerful influence on those without, strengthening, especially in the Eastern synods, the already awakened confessional consciousness."

**95. Remaining Contradictions.** — Even apart from the actual conditions prevailing in the General Synod as to Lu-

theran doctrine and practise, one cannot maintain successfully that the General Synod, in adopting the new articles, fully and satisfactorily cleared the situation as to its doctrinal attitude. For in more than one respect also the official confessional movement inaugurated in 1891 was contradictory of itself. First: In a previous paragraph we have already referred to the contradiction contained in the fact that the General Synod, while adopting the new resolutions, at the same time reaffirmed and endorsed the York Amendment of 1864. This endorsement, which practically invalidates the adoption of the new articles, was not withdrawn at the subsequent conventions in 1911 and 1913. The York Amendment still bears the official seal of the General Synod. Dr Singmaster says in *Distinctive Doctrines* of 1914: "The doctrinal basis, as amended in 1866 [1864], remained unchanged for nearly fifty years. Various deliverances made at the convention of the General Synod during this period repudiate false charges, and affirm the Lutheran character and confessional fidelity of the body. . . . The doctrinal basis as it now exists, means to the members of the General Synod exactly what it meant before its verbal amendment. For a generation it has been interpreted to mean an unequivocal subscription to the Augsburg Confession." (57.) Secondly: The so-called York Resolution, which, as shown above (No. 71), rejects the Lutheran doctrines of the real presence, absolution, and the Sunday, thus openly conflicting with the Atchison Amendments of 1913, which give an unqualified assent to the Augsburg Confession, was not rescinded by the General Synod. The report of the delegate to the General Council, adopted by the General Synod in 1909, states: "In our address before the General Council [1907] as your representative, we defended, with all the courtesy, clearness, and positiveness we could command, the confessional position of the General Synod. This we did by referring to our official declarations, namely, the York Resolution of 1864, our revised formula of confessional subscription of 1869 [1864], in which this body planted itself unequivocally on the Augustana, and our confessional resolutions of 1895 and 1901." (54.) At the same convention the General Synod declared: "Those official resolutions [of 1895 and 1901], together with the well-known York Resolution, adopted in 1864, bind the General

Synod to the Augsburg Confession in its entirety" (57.) In keeping herewith the General Synod provided that, in all future editions of the Augsburg Confession published by the General Synod, the confessional declarations of the General Synod (the York Amendment and the resolutions of 1895, 1901, and 1909) "be inserted immediately after the York Resolution." (59) Nor was the York Resolution disavowed at the convention at Washington, 1911, as appears from the following recommendation of the Common Service Committee adopted by Synod: "With these amendments [finally adopted at Atchison] there remains only the York Resolution of 1864, concerning alleged errors, to be disposed of. As this is simply of an explanatory and apologetic character, it cannot well be incorporated in the constitution. It seems to your committee that this resolution has served its purpose, and needs no further repetition, *especially as it remains on record for reference.* We believe that both the constitution and the confession will appear more dignified, and will inspire greater confidence, unbuttressed by subsidiary statements." Accordingly, the York Resolution "remained on record for reference." (24.) Thirdly: The amendments of 1913 are in a hopeless conflict also with Art IV, Sec. 8, of the General Synod's constitution, reading as follows: "They [Synod] shall, however, be extremely careful that the consciences of ministers of the Gospel be not burdened with human inventions, laws, or devices, and that no one be oppressed by reason of differences of opinion on non-fundamental doctrines." Accordingly, while the Atchison formula calls for an unqualified subscription to all doctrines of the Augustana, Art. IV, Sec. 8, of the same constitution grants liberty in "non-fundamental doctrines," *i. e.*, interpreted historically, liberty in the articles which distinguish the Lutheran Church from the Reformed and other Evangelical Churches. — The convention at Richmond, 1909, maintained: "It is only by her [General Synod's] official declarations that her doctrinal position is to be tested and judged." (58.) If this contention, though facts frequently speak louder and much more convincingly than formulas, be granted — according to which set of contradictory "official declarations" was one to test and judge the true attitude of the General Synod?

### ACTUAL CONDITIONS.

**96. Long Stride from Formula to Fact.** — Formal adoption of a correct Lutheran basis does not necessarily imply actual agreement with such basis. To pass a good resolution is easy. All Christian sects protest that they accept the Bible. But they say, and do not. "What you *are*," said Emerson, "speaks so loudly that I cannot hear what you *say*." In a measure this also applies when the actual conditions prevailing in the General Synod before and after 1913 are compared with the doctrinal basis adopted in that year. In 1866, in a letter to Pastor Brunn, Walther wrote with reference to the synods then uniting to form the General Council: "As far as the latter are concerned, it is true that our testimony extending over a period of twenty years has by the grace of God cooperated in causing some synods to speak again of the Confession, and to base and pledge themselves upon it, at least formally; but it is a long stride from the formal acknowledgment of the symbols to a true knowledge of them, and a truly Lutheran spirit, and the consequent discipline of doctrine and life." (*Letters*, 2, 36.) Now, the General Synod did not adopt its present basis as a result of any doctrinal discussions of, and subsequent agreements in, the Lutheran doctrines. The confessional movement was a formal affair, without any special effort to arrive at a thorough understanding of, and true unity in, the doctrinal content of the Augustana. But what value is there in adopting a confession without a correct knowledge of, and agreement in, its doctrines? Furthermore, the Atchison Amendments were submitted to the District Synods for approval by majority vote, not to the individual ministers and congregations. Adoption, accordingly, did not mean unanimous acknowledgment. Moreover, the liberal party of the General Synod, as represented by the *Lutheran Observer*, openly denounced the new confessional resolutions. (*L. u. W.* 1916, 58.) Others who submitted to the new formula, no doubt felt justified, in accordance with the repeated approvals on the part of the General Synod of the basis of 1864, to interpret the former according to the latter.

**97. Doctrinal Confusion.** — The General Synod has always been a babel of doctrinal confusion. In it unity did not even

prevail as to the doctrines which distinguish the Lutheran Church from the Reformed. From 1820 down to 1918 the General Synod, in its periodicals and by its representative men, and in part also as such and officially, defended and supported indifferentism, unionism, synergism, chiliasm, abstinence, the divine obligation of the Sabbath, and other un-Lutheran and distinctively Reformed doctrines (*L. u. W.* 1917, 471; 1918, 43.) Doctrinal discipline never has had as much as a shadow of an existence within the General Synod. Nor did the Atchison Amendments effect any apparent and marked change in the spirit and attitude of doctrinal indifferentism. Reformed errorists were tolerated after as well as before 1913. In its issue of September 12, 1918, the *Lutheran Church Work and Observer* declared: "Our body breathes the free atmosphere of America, and is not so legalistic and Puritanical as to think that every person who offends must be brought before the judgment-bar of the church for discipline." After as well as before 1913 some of the General Synodists continued to indulge in dreams of a millennium and union of all Evangelical denominations in America. (*L. u. W.* 1918, 87; *Luth. Wit.* 1918, 373.) The Sabbath-day was declared to be "of perpetual authority," and its observance as "binding on all by divine requirement." In 1918 the *Lutheran Church Work* asked for state legislation to enforce the Sabbath, because the "Almighty Jehovah is 'the Lord of the Sabbath,' and has given us an indication of the importance which He places on His holy day by having put it even before the commandment in the Decalog which says: 'Honor thy father and thy mother.'" (*L. u. W.* 1918, 336; cf. 1915, 397; 1911, 510.) The same old Puritanical attitude was maintained by the General Synod also with respect to the prohibition movement. (*Proceedings* 1917, 140 ff.)

**98. Tolerating Modern Liberalism.** — The General Synod never did, nor intended to, exercise church-discipline with respect to Reformed aberrations. Nor is there a single case of church-discipline against any form of liberalism recorded. Yet practically from its very beginning the General Synod declared herself against Socinianism. And in 1909 the *Lutheran Quarterly* stated that the General Synod, though not exercising church-discipline with respect to Reformed errors, does exclude

Unitarians, Universalists, and Christian Scientists (15) In 1917 the *Lutheran* asserted: The Lutheran Church in America "stands as a unit in protest against the creed of Reason, known as the ever-variable 'New Theology,' and presents an unbroken front in loyalty to the Gospel." (*L. u. W.* 1917, 562) But is this claim really borne out by the facts? The theory of evolution, which vitiates every Christian doctrine when applied to theology, has been defended again and again in the *Lutheran Observer*, the *Lutheran Quarterly*, the *Lutheran Church Work*, and other publications of the General Synod. Endorsing the evolution doctrine, the *Observer* wrote in 1909: "That a law of development runs through all nature, life, and history, is one of the ruling postulates in present-day investigations. That the continuity of nature, life, and history which this implies is not inconsistent with theistic and Christian belief is also clearly recognized, and consequently the impression of a panicky feeling which pervaded so much of the discussion of evolution which immediately followed the publication of the *Origin of Species* [of Darwin], is to-day conspicuous by its absence" (*L. u. W.* 1909, 279.) In 1901: "Originally, all was soft and plastic. The granite foundations were mortar and ashes or cinders and water. Cosmic forces have since been crystallizing rocks out of the same elements which exist in the soil, or float in the streams and exhale in the atmosphere." (*L. u. W.* 1901, 185.) In 1917 the *Lutheran Quarterly* declared that the doctrine of evolution can be accepted "in so far as it is descriptive of God's method with the world." (96.) Dr. L. S. Keyser, of Wittenberg Seminary, philosophizes: "God created the primordial material. Without losing His transcendence, He became immanent in His creation, developing it through secondary causes for, doubtless, long eras; at certain crucial steps, as was necessary, He added new creations and injected new forces; such epochs were the introduction of life, sentience, and man. This world-view should be called 'creation and evolution,' with as marked an emphasis on the former as on the latter." (*Syst. of Nat. Theol.*, 114.) Furthermore, in 1891 the *Lutheran Observer* editorially defended Dr. Briggs, whom the Presbyterians expelled because of his liberalism, as an innocently persecuted man. (*L. u. W.* 1901, 214.) In 1901 the *Lutheran Quarterly* said of Harnack that in his *Essence of*

*Christianity* he assigns a position to Christ "which must have made a deep impression on his hearers." (*L. u. W.* 1901, 370.) In 1909: "Even if we should in the end have to acknowledge that Jesus had a human father as well as a human mother, that would simply teach us what we are confessing and believing even now: Jesus is not alone true God, but likewise true man. His divinity would not be affected thereby." (*L. u. W.* 1909, 228.) In 1918 the *Lutheran Church Work and Observer* recommended Dr. James Denney's book, *The Atonement and the Modern Mind*, in which Denney practically rejects the authority of the Scriptures and departs from the Christian doctrine of satisfaction made by Christ. (*L. u. W.* 1918, 482) In the *Lutheran Church Work and Observer*, April 4, 1918, Rev. W. R. Goff maintained: "The writer cannot find one passage in Scripture that definitely and positively asserts a *visible* return of the Lord." (*L. u. W.* 1918, 423.)

99. A Second Edition of Quitman. — For quite a number of years Dr. E. H. Delk, a prominent member of the General Synod, has been an ardent advocate of modern rationalism and evolutionism. He denies the verbal inspiration and inerrancy of the Bible, rejects the Lutheran doctrine of the union of the divine and human natures in Christ, attacks the dogma that the death of Christ was a ransom and a substitutional sacrifice for the sins of the world, corrupts every Christian doctrine, and demands that all of them be restated in order to bring them into harmony with modern evolutionistic science and philosophy. "The Bible and our Confession do not ask man to throw away his reason in the reception of truth and in the judgment of the theological problems," Delk declared in 1903. (*L. u. W.* 1903, 185.) A number of years ago, Dr. Delk was permitted to present his radical views to the students of Gettysburg Seminary; and the *Lutheran Quarterly* published the lecture without a word of criticism. At Atchison, 1913, when resolutions were offered rejecting the doctrines of Delk, the General Synod refused to take definite action. The *Lutheran Observer* boasted that Synod was not ready to sacrifice liberty of thought and speech. (*L. u. W.* 1901, 370; 1902, 136; 1903, 185; 1913, 145; 1916, 67.) In 1916 the *Lutheran Church Work and Observer*, the official organ of the General Synod,

opened its columns to Delk and his theology. In 1917 Delk continued his propaganda by publishing his views in a booklet, *The Need of a Restatement of Theology*. In 1918 the *Lutheran Church Work and Observer* endorsed and advertised the book. Identifying himself with some of the views of modern German liberalism on Luther and his theology, Delk wrote in the *Lutheran Church Work and Observer* of November 1, 1917: "We see now in the light of a fuller history of the man [Luther] that he was a child of his age and carried over into his Protestant thinking traits of medieval thinking. . . . Luther was not the end, but the beginning of new advances in the political and religious ideals of the world. . . . We are separated by a millennium of thought from the critical thought-standpoint of Luther." (*L. u. W.* 1918, 43.) Also by Drs. Keyser and Voigt, Delk has been charged with substituting the teachings of philosophy and science for Christianity, and with propagating heretical doctrine concerning the inspiration of the Bible and the deity and atonement of Christ. The advocacy of evolutionistic theology, as tolerated by the General Synod, however, cannot but be regarded as a return to the rationalism of Quitman and Velthusen.

### UNLUTHERAN PRACTISE.

100. Unionism Unabated. — In 1917 Dr. Neve wrote in the *Lutheran Church Review*: "The different Protestant Churches, that is, the leading ones, are not arbitrary developments with no right to exist, but they represent the historical endeavors to bring to an expression within the Church of Christ the truth of Scripture" (167.) This view was at the bottom of the pulpit, altar, and church-work fellowship indulged in by the General Synod throughout the course of its history from 1820 down to its exit in 1918. This attitude of indifferentism naturally led to the exchange of fraternal delegates with the Reformed and other Churches. It resulted in a cooperation of the General Synod with the Federal Council, the Home Missions Council, the Foreign Mission Conference, the International Sunday-school Association, the Sunday-school Council of Evangelical Denominations, the Inter-Church Federation, the Y. M. C. A., the Y. W. C. A., the W. C. T. U.,

the Anti-Saloon League, etc. And the new confessional resolutions brought no change in this practise. With respect to the action of the Wartburg Synod, excluding other than Lutheran ministers from its pulpits and other than Lutherans from its altars, Dr. J. A. Singmaster, at the convention in Richmond, 1909, offered the resolution "that the General Synod, while allowing all congregations and individuals connected with it the fullest Christian liberty, does not approve of synodical enactments which in any way narrow its confessional basis or abridge intersynodical fellowship and transfers." (*Proceedings* 1909, 128; Neve, *Gesch.*, 73.) The *Lutheran Observer* remained the same enthusiast for "interdenominational fraternal cooperation and work in the Federation of Churches," etc. (*L. u. W.* 1916, 63.) The ministers of the General Synod continued to exchange pulpits and to arrange for joint celebrations with sectarian preachers. (*Witness* 1918, 404; 1919, 14.) Despite the new basis of 1913, the General Synod remained a member of the Federal Council, which Dr. Delk in 1912 extolled as the "Twentieth Century Ecumenical Council." In 1909 the report of the delegates to the Federal Council was adopted, stating: "We heartily endorse the work of the Council, and we welcome the opportunity of cooperating with all who love our Lord Jesus Christ in promoting the work of His kingdom. . . . We recommend that nine delegates be sent, and that an annual contribution of \$450 be paid out of the treasury of the General Synod for the support of the Federal Council." (115.) Again, in 1917, a report of the delegates to the Third Quadrennial Meeting of the Federal Council was adopted, which said, in part: "The Federal Council is mobilizing the forces of Protestantism against any and every foe of evangelical principles and practises. A committee has been appointed to arrange a Pan-Protestant Reformation celebration for 1917. . . . It was a great privilege to have participated in this historic council. As the federation idea originated in the United States in the mind and heart of a learned and devout Lutheran, Dr. Samuel S. Schmucker, it was a great joy and satisfaction to see and participate in this consummation of Dr. Schmucker's hope of all Protestant bodies in council and cooperation in the one common task of propagating the kingdom of God in society and throughout the world." (27.) Dr. MacFarland, the Gen-

eral Secretary of the Federal Council, was introduced, and addressed the General Synod. (131) In the same year the General Synod appointed Dr. Delk, Dr. Wolford, Rev. Russell, and three laymen as "delegates to the Federal Council," and Dr. Bell as "representative to General Assembly of Presbyterian Church." (372.)

101. Fellowshiping Jews and Unitarians. — Universally General Synodists, down to the Merger in 1918, have defended and practised church-fellowship with the Evangelical denominations. Regarding religious communion with Jews and Unitarians, however, Dr. Neve wrote in 1909: "Such is a rare occurrence and always would meet with the disapproval of nearly all members of the General Synod." (*Lutheran Quarterly* 1909, 12. 19.) According to Neve, then, there are members of the General Synod who do approve of church-fellowship even with Jews and Unitarians. Commenting in the *Lutheran Church Work and Observer*, of October 31, 1918, on a Communion service in which Episcopalians, Presbyterians, Reformed, Unitarians, etc., united, Dr. L. E. Keyser declared: "Such a conglomeration of beliefs and creeds would be impossible in the Lutheran Church. To stand or kneel at the altar with people who even deny the deity of Christ, the doctrine of the Trinity, and the need of atonement for sin, is impossible with Lutherans who are serious in their convictions." But what of the facts? In 1903 the *Lutheran Observer* declared: "When, at the great Parliament of Religions in Chicago, men of all beliefs united in the Lord's Prayer, who shall say that they had no right to do it, even though it was not with full understanding of its meaning? God is the All-Father. All men are His children." (*L. u. W.* 1903, 184.) At the World's Fair in St. Louis, 1904, Dr. Rhodes of the General Synod celebrated a union Thanksgiving Service in Festival Hall with Archbishop Glennon, Rabbi Harrison, etc. (*L. u. W.* 1904, 565.) In 1909 Dr. Delk indulged in religious fellowship with the Reformed Jews in a Jewish temple. (*L. u. W.* 1909, 558 f.) On November 28, 1918, Rev. A. Homrighaus united in a Thanksgiving service, in which a Jewish rabbi and a Unitarian participated, etc. (*Luth. Witness* 1919, 14.)

102. Encouraging Lodgery. — The General Synod has never taken a stand against Freemasonry or any other secret society. To join a lodge was always viewed as a purely private affair and of no concern to the Church. Neither laymen nor ministers were forbidden to unite with lodges. Indeed, for a minister to attain a higher degree in a lodge was occasionally referred to as a special honor and regarded as a recommendation. In 1902 the *Pennsylvania Freemason* said of Dr. Stock, a pastor of the General Synod: "The Doctor is in possession of the highest honors of Freemasonry, and enjoys the love and respect of all his brothers. As indicating his good influence for Freemasonry we mention of his writings: *What Freemasonry Owes to Luther, The Knight Templar and the Holy Week*." Copying this, the *Lutheran Evangelist* commented that everybody has a right to join a lodge as long as he gives the first place in his heart to the Church. (*L. u. W.* 1902, 115.) The *Observer*, March 14, 1902, reported with satisfaction that the prominent Lutheran Mr. Dewey had become Grand Master of the Freemasons in Kansas, and appointed his pastor, the Rev. Fuller Bergstresser, Grand Chaplain of the lodge. (*L. u. W.* 1902, 115.) Lodge-membership, said the *Observer* of January 17, 1913, is a non-essential, permitted by the Augsburg Confession. Reviewing a sermon of Rev Bowers in which he defended and recommended the lodges, the *Lutheran Observer*, in 1909, remarked: "It is a fair and unprejudiced presentation." (*L. u. W.* 1909, 227.) In the same year a committee of the General Synod declared with respect to a resolution of the Wartburg and Nebraska synods, forbidding their ministers to hold membership in lodges: "The General Synod as a body has never taken any action, so far as we know, upon the so-called lodge-question. We deem its position sound and wise, and especially in view of the fact that the Lutheran bodies in this country which have indulged in such legislation have by no means escaped trouble. . . . We deem it their [Wartburg and Nebraska synods'] synodical right so to judge and affirm so long as they do not ask other synods of this body to accept their judgment and affirm their action. . . . A synod has a right to voluntarily restrict itself if it so chooses, and impose upon itself such limitations as it may elect." (*Proceedings* 1909, 126 f.) Also with respect to this attitude of the General

Synod toward the lodges the Atchison Amendments brought about no marked change whatever. After as well as before 1913 prominent lodge-men, without protest, were elected to, or continued to hold, some of the most important offices of Synod. In 1917 Dr. George Tressler, a 32d degree Scotch Rite Mason and a Knight Templar, was chosen president of the General Synod. Prof. C. G. Heckert, president of the Theological Seminary at Springfield, O., is a Freemason. Mr J. L. Zimmerman, president of the Lutheran Brotherhood of the General Synod, who took a leading part in the Lutheran Merger movement, also is, and was publicly declared to be, a Mason. Nor did the practise cease of arranging for special lodge-services and entertainments of lodges. September 17, 1918, the Masonic Lodge of Camp Hill, N. J., held its anniversary dinner at the General Synod church, the women of the church serving the dinner, etc. (*Luth. Witness* 1918, 386.)

103. New Formula Dead Letter. — Though one will readily admit that the Atchison Amendments signified a stride forward officially and formally, the actual conditions prevailing within the General Synod till the Merger in 1918 (the official indifferentistic and unionistic attitude of the General Synod as such, as well as the teaching and practise of District Synods, ministers, and congregations) were not in agreement, but in open conflict with the formula of 1913. In its issue of June 18, 1915, the *Observer* stated: "The acceptance of this basis, they [the opponents of the new basis] further maintain, involves certain corollaries, such as the rule of 'Lutheran pulpits for Lutheran ministers only, and Lutheran altars for Lutheran communicants only'; the withdrawal of fellowship with other Christian bodies in general religious and moral movements, such as the Federation of the Churches, the International Sunday-school Lesson Series, and evangelistic campaigns, in which the congregations of a community unite their efforts to reach the multitudes of the unchurched and the unsaved. It includes also condemnation of secret orders, such as Masonry and Odd-Fellowship." (*L. u. W.* 1916, 58.) Such, indeed, was the price of the new doctrinal basis. The General Synod as a whole, however, was evidently neither possessed of the power nor even of the earnest will to draw the consequences of her

new articles practically. The fact certainly is, as shown in the preceding paragraphs, that neither the General Synod as such nor its constituency did make any serious effort at paying the price required by an unqualified subscription to the Augustana as professed at Atchison. However, as long as a religious body contents itself with having a correct Lutheran basis merely incorporated in the constitution; as long as it shows no determination in reducing the principles of such basis to actual practise; as long as it objects to the discipline which this basis calls for; as long as it declines responsibility for contrary teaching and practise on the part of its ministers and congregations; as long as it adheres to the principle of agreeing to disagree on doctrines plainly taught in the Lutheran Confessions, and never to settle disputed points, but to omit them and declare them free, — just so long even the very best Lutheran basis embodied in a constitution will remain, in more than one respect, a scrap of paper and its formal recognition “a solemn farce and empty show.”

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## The General Council.

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### SYNODS COMPOSING THE COUNCIL.

**104. Organization of New General Body.** — After severing its connection with the General Synod at its convention at Lancaster in 1866, the Ministerium of Pennsylvania appointed a committee (Drs Krotel, Krauth, Mann, C W. Schaeffer, Seiss, B M. Schmucker, Welden, Brobst, Laird, etc ) to issue a fraternal address to all Lutheran synods, ministers, and congregations in the United States and Canada which confess the Unaltered Augsburg Confession, inviting them to a conference for the purpose of forming a general body of Lutheran synods, in the interest, especially, of maintaining "the unity in the true faith of the Gospel and in the uncorrupted Sacraments." Accordingly, in December of the same year, representatives from thirteen synods met in Reading, Pa. The synods represented were the Pennsylvania Synod, the New York Ministerium, the Pittsburgh Synod, the Minnesota Synod, the English Synod of Ohio, the Joint Synod of Ohio, the English District Synod of Ohio, the Wisconsin Synod, the Michigan Synod, the Iowa Synod, the Canada Synod, the Norwegian Synod, and the Missouri Synod. After the Fundamental Principles of Faith and Church Polity and Articles on Ecclesiastical Power and Church Government, prepared and submitted by Dr C. P. Krauth, and discussed from the 12th to the 14th of December, had been approved, the resolution was passed that the first regular session of the new body, "The General Council of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of North America," should be held, if the Fundamental Principles had been adopted by ten synods. At the first regular meeting in Fort Wayne, November 20, 1867, again representatives of thirteen synods were present, the Augustana and Illinois synods taking the place of the Missourians and Norwegians, who had withdrawn from the movement.

**105. Synods Remaining with the Council.** — Of the synods represented at Fort Wayne the following retained their

connection with the General Council throughout its history.

1. The Ministerium of Pennsylvania, the so-called "Mother Synod" of the Lutheran Church in America. It was organized 1748 by Muhlenberg. In 1778, numbering 18 ministers, it adopted a constitution which formally acknowledged all of the Lutheran symbols. The new constitution of 1792 admitted lay delegates, but eliminated the confessional basis. In 1820 it was represented at the organization of the General Synod at Hagerstown. At the same time it planned a union seminary and organic union with the German Reformed Church. In 1823 it severed its connection with the General Synod, which was followed by a long period of indifferentism. In 1850 the Ministerium established official relations with the Gettysburg Seminary. In 1853 it returned officially to a confessional position, adopting "the fundamental doctrines of the Gospel as these are expressed in the confessional writings of our Evangelical Lutheran Church and especially in the Unaltered Augsburg Confession." In the same year, urging all other Lutheran bodies to follow the example, the Ministerium, by a vote of 52 against 28, resolved to reunite with the General Synod. In 1864 its delegates withdrew from the sessions of the General Synod at York because of the admission of the un-Lutheran Franckean Synod. In the same year the Seminary at Philadelphia was founded. In the organization of the General Council the Ministerium of Pennsylvania was the prime mover. At present it numbers about 400 pastors and 580 congregations with a communicant membership of 160,000, more than one-fifth of them being German.

2. The New York Ministerium. This body, when organized in 1786, confessed the Lutheran symbols. In 1794 it adopted the new constitution of the Pennsylvania Synod, containing no reference to the symbols. Under Quitman a period of rationalism and Socinianism followed, and under Hazelius (since 1815 professor in Hartwick Seminary) a period of Methodistic revivalism. In 1859 the Ministerium acknowledged the Augsburg Confession "as a correct exhibition of the fundamental doctrines of the divine Word," and in 1867, having severed its connection with the General Synod, extended its confession to embrace all the Lutheran symbols. The New York Ministerium has repeatedly

passed through a change of language. It numbers about 57,000 communicants, 160 congregations, and as many pastors. 3. The Pittsburgh Synod. It was organized in 1845 and admitted by the General Synod in 1853. Under W. A. Passavant it became the "Missionary Synod," to which the Canada, Texas, Minnesota, and Nova Scotia synods owe their origin. It reports 155 pastors and 190 congregations with a communicant membership of 24,000. 4. The English District Synod of Ohio, organized in 1857 and, in 1869, because of its connection with the Council, stricken from the roster of the Joint Synod of Ohio, embraces 55 pastors, 86 congregations, and 14,000 communicants. 5. The Canada Synod, founded in 1861, went on record as opposed to exceptions in the rule regarding pulpit- and altar-fellowship. Most of its present pastors come from Kropp, Germany. It reports 42 ministers, 74 congregations, and 14,000 communicants. 6. The Augustana Synod, which maintained its connections with the Council till 1918, when it refused to enter the Lutheran Merger. It numbers about 700 pastors and 1,200 congregations with a confirmed membership of 190,000.

106. Defections and Accessions. — The following seven synods partly declined to consummate the union, partly were temporarily only connected with the General Council: 1. The Iowa Synod, whose representatives declared before the close of the session at Fort Wayne, 1867, that they, though their Synod had adopted the constitution, could not unite with the Council on account of its equivocal attitude toward pulpit-, altar-, and lodge-fellowship. The privilege of the floor granted by the General Council to the delegates of the Iowa Synod was accepted and freely exercised till the Lutheran Merger in 1918. The Iowa Synod thus remained in church fellowship with the General Council and took part also in its missionary and other works. In 1875, the so-called Galesburg Rule having been adopted by the Council, the Iowa Synod declared that confessional scruples no longer prevented her from an organic union with the Council. The union was not consummated because the anti-unionistic construction which Iowa put on the Galesburg Rule was disavowed within the General Council and never acknowledged and approved of by this body as such. In

1904, Prof. Proehl, delegate of the Iowa Synod, gloried in the Council as *optima repraesentatio nominis Lutherani*, the best representation of the Lutheran name, a tribute, however, which President Deindoerfer of the Iowa Synod refused to endorse. (*L. u. W.* 1904, 38. 516.) 2. The Joint Synod of Ohio had not adopted the constitution of the General Council; and at Fort Wayne, 1867, her delegates finally declined to enter the union because of the non-committal attitude of the Council with respect to chiliasm, pulpit- and altar-fellowship and the lodges — the so-called Four Points. 3. The Wisconsin Synod separated in 1868 because of the "Four Points." 4. The Michigan Synod, organized in 1860, united with the Council in 1867, withdrew in 1887, and joined the Synodical Conference in 1892. 5. The Minnesota Synod, founded in 1860, united with the General Synod; in 1867 it joined the Council; in 1871 it severed this connection and became a member of the Synodical Conference. 6. The Texas Synod joined the Council in 1868, and left it in 1895, entering the Iowa Synod as Texas District. — The following synods, most of them founded by the General Council, affiliated with this body after its organization in 1867: 1. The Chicago Synod, a name adopted later, organized and joined the Council in 1871 as Indiana Synod. It numbers about 40 pastors and 70 congregations with a communicant membership of 8,300. Its center is the Theological Seminary located near Chicago (Maywood). 2 The English Synod of the Northwest was founded by the Council in 1891 which led to various frictions with the Swedish Augustana Synod. Pastors, 37; congregations, 40; communicants, 11,000. 3. The Synod of Manitoba, founded 1897, numbers 35 pastors, 62 congregations, and 5,000 communicants. 4. The Pacific Synod, organized by the Council in 1901, numbers 21 pastors, 18 congregations, and 1,906 communicants. 5. The Synod of New York and New England, organized in 1902, embraces 65 pastors, 67 congregations, and 19,000 communicants. 6. The Nova Scotia Synod, organized in 1903, reports 6 pastors, 27 congregations, and 2,900 communicants. 7. The Synod of Central Canada, organized 1909, numbers 12 pastors, 16 congregations, and 1,800 communicants.

107. Statistical and Other Data. — In 1917, a year before the Merger, the General Council reported 13 district synods

with about 1,700 pastors, 2,600 congregations, and a confirmed membership of 530,000. Among the higher institutions then within the Council were the following: 1. The Philadelphia Seminary, now located in Mount Airy, Pa., and belonging to the Pennsylvania Synod. Since its founding in 1864 this seminary has educated almost 875 pastors under the Professors Drs. C. F. and L. W. Schaeffer, Mann, Krauth, Krotel, Spaeth, H. E. and C. M. Jacobs, Hilprecht, Spieker, Frey, Offermann (appointed by the New York Ministerium), Schmauk, Reed, Benze. 2. The Chicago Seminary, located in Maywood, Ill., was founded by Passavant and opened 1891. Here about 260 pastors were trained by the Drs. Weidner, Krauss, Gerberding, Ramsey, and Stump. 3. The Swedish Seminary in Rock Island, Ill. (founded in Chicago in 1860 and removed to Rock Island in 1875), has graduated more than 700 pastors. 4. The Seminary at Kropp, Schleswig, Germany, founded 1882 by Paulsen, for years received support from the General Council. 5. Muhlenberg College, at Allentown, Pa., founded 1867 by the Pennsylvania Synod, now directed by Dr. Haas. 6. Wagner College, at Rochester, N. Y., founded 1883 by the New York Ministerium, Dr. Nicum being one of its professors and benefactors. 7. Thiel College, at Greenville, Pa., founded 1870 by the Pittsburgh Synod. 8. The Swedish Bethany College, founded in 1881 at Lindsborg, Kans. 9. The Swedish Gustavus Adolphus College, at St. Peter, Minn. 10. The Swedish Luther Academy, at Wahoo, Nebr. — Apart from the Augustana Synod, about 160 parochial schools, mostly Saturday and vacation schools, have been conducted within the General Council. Judging from Dr. Gerberding's *Problems and Possibilities* (115) and similar utterances, the English element in the General Council, like that of the General Synod, was opposed to parish schools. Foremost among the numerous benevolent institutions are the Wartburg Orphan Asylum and the Drexel Deaconess Home. In 1869 the General Council assumed the support of that part of the India mission which the General Synod, after the breach in 1866, was about to surrender to the Episcopalians. In 1841 "Father Heyer had been sent as the first American Lutheran missionary to India. He returned

in 1857 and began home missionary work in Minnesota. In 1869, seventy-six years old, he offered his services to the Pennsylvania Synod for the Lutheran Mission in India, where he labored till 1871."

#### CHARLES PORTERFIELD KRAUTH.

108. **A Star of the First Magnitude.**—Charles Porterfield Krauth (1823—1883), son of Charles Philip Krauth, was educated at Pennsylvania College and the Seminary in Gettysburg. He was licensed in 1841 and ordained 1842. He served as pastor in Baltimore from 1842; in Shepherdstown and Martinsburg 1847; in Winchester 1848; in St. Thomas, West Indies, 1852 (a Dutch Reformed congregation during the absence of its pastor); in Pittsburgh, Pa., from 1855; in Philadelphia from 1859. In 1861 he resigned his pastorate in order to devote his whole strength to the editorship of the *Lutheran and Missionary*, which in his hands became a weapon against the excrescences of the American Lutheranism then ruling the English Lutheran Church of our country. In 1864, when the Theological Seminary at Philadelphia was founded, Krauth was appointed professor of Dogmatic Theology. He was the prime mover in the establishment of the General Council; wrote the Fraternal Address of 1866, inviting the Lutheran synods to unite in the organization of a new general truly Lutheran body; and was the author of the Fundamental Articles of Faith and Church Polity adopted at the convention at Reading, 1866. Krauth presented the theses on pulpit- and altar-fellowship in 1877, framed the constitution for congregations of 1880, and assisted in the liturgical work which resulted in the publication of the Church Book, completed in 1891. From 1870 to 1880 Krauth was president of the General Council. In 1868 he was appointed professor of Mental and Moral Philosophy at the University of Pennsylvania. In 1880 he made a journey to Europe for his own recuperation and in the interest of a Luther biography, which, however, did not make its appearance. In 1882, a year before his death, he became editor-in-chief of the *Lutheran Church Review*. He died January 2, 1883. Besides contributing many articles to the *Lutheran* and to various reviews and encyclopedias, Krauth translated Tholuck's *Commentary on the Gospel of*

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*John*, 1859, edited Fleming's *Vocabulary of Philosophy*, 1860; wrote the *Conservative Reformation and Its Theology*, 1872; and published a number of other books of a philosophical and theological character. The most important of Krauth's numerous publications is *The Conservative Reformation and Its Theology*. The *Lutheran Church Review*, 1917: "It is doubtful whether any other single book ever published in America by any theologian more profoundly impressed a large [English] church constituency, or did more to mold its character. As theologian and confessor Dr. Krauth stands pre-eminent in the [English] Lutheran Church." (144.) For twenty years Charles Porterfield Krauth was one of the prominent theologians of the General Synod, and since 1866 the leader and most conservative, competent, and influential theologian of the General Council. Krauth was a star of the first magnitude in the Lutheran Church of America, or as Walther put it, "the most eminent man in the English Lutheran Church of this country, a man of rare learning, at home no less in the old than in modern theology, and, what is of greatest import, whole-heartedly devoted to the pure doctrine of our Church, as he had learned to understand it, a noble man and without guile." (*L. u. W.* 1883, 32.)

109. **Krauth's Manly Recantation.** — During the first half of his ecclesiastical activity C. P. Krauth was a pronounced unionistic theologian. He fully endorsed the indifferentistic principles of the General Synod, whose champion he was till 1864. During the Platform controversy Krauth was zealous to settle the difficulties on the accustomed unionistic lines of the General Synod. He framed the compromise resolutions of the Pittsburgh Synod in 1856 on the Definite Platform. In the following year he wrote a series of articles for the *Missionary* in defense of the General Synod and its doctrinal basis. In 1858 he defended S. S. Schmucker against the charges of unsound doctrine, preferred by J. A. Brown. In 1859 he offered the motion for the admission of the liberal Melancthon Synod. As late as 1864 he continued to defend the distinction between fundamental and non-fundamental articles in the Augsburg Confession, and declared that the pledge referred to the fundamental articles only, specifically excluding Article XI of the

Augsburg Confession from this pledge. In the *Lutheran and Missionary*, April 7, 1864, Krauth declared: "Let the old formula stand, and let it be defined." As late as 1868, three years after his public retraction of former errors, and later, Krauth held that, exceptionally, non-Lutherans might be admitted to Lutheran pulpits and altars. Dr Singmaster writes: "That the Definite Platform caused the secession of the Ministerium [of Pennsylvania] some years later seems quite improbable, for the chief promoter of the General Council, the Rev. C. P. Krauth, Jr., was at this time an ardent defender of the General Synod. He made apologies for his old teacher [S. S. Schmucker], and probably prevented his impeachment by the Seminary Board when it was urged by the Rev J. A. Brown." (*Dist. Doctr.*, 1914, 53 ) In the *Lutheran and Missionary*, July 13, 1865, Krauth published that remarkable declaration in which he, defining his position as to fundamentals, retracted, as he put it, his former "crudities and inconsistencies" on this point. Among his statements are the following: "We do not feel ashamed to confess that time and experience have modified our earlier views, or led us to abandon them, if we have so modified or so forsaken them." "In Church and State the last years have wrought changes, deep and thorough, in every thinking man, and on no point more than this, that compromise of principle, however specious, is immoral, and that, however guarded it may be, it is perilous; and that there is no guarantee of peace in words where men do not agree in things." "To true unity of the Church is necessary an agreement in fundamentals, and a vital part of the necessity is an agreement as to what are fundamentals. The doctrinal articles of the Augsburg Confession are all articles of faith, and all articles of faith are fundamental. Our Church can never have a genuine internal harmony, except in the confession, without reservation or ambiguity of these articles, one and all. This is our deep conviction, and we hereby retract, before God and His Church, formally, as we have already earnestly and repeatedly done indirectly, everything we have written or said in conflict with this our present conviction. This we are not ashamed to do. We thank God, who has led us to see the truth, and we thank Him for freeing us from the temptation of embarrassing ourselves with the pretense of a present abso-

lute consistency with our earlier, very sincere, yet relatively very immature views." (Spaeth, 2, 114 f.) Walther, who had rounded out almost a quarter century of faithful Lutheran work when Krauth was still a champion of the original basis of the General Synod, gloried in this frank and manly retraction of Krauth as "an imperishable monument of the sincerity of his convictions."

#### 110. Endorsing Walther's Views on Christian Union.—

In opposition to the unionistic tendencies of the Lutheran synods in the United States, especially those affiliated with the General Synod, Walther had maintained that church union dare not be advocated and effected at the expense of any doctrine clearly revealed in the Scripture. It was in complete agreement with this view that Krauth, in his address before the Pittsburgh Synod, October 1866, declared: "With her eternal principles, what shall be the future of our beloved Zion in this land? Shall it be conflict, division, weakness, or shall it be peace, unity, zeal, unfolding all her energies? It is unity. Every difficulty in her way, every barrier to her progress, proceeds from the lack of unity. But what is the unity of the Church? That question was answered three centuries ago by the Reformers, and fifteen centuries before that in the New Testament. True unity is oneness in faith, as taught in the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. We are one with the Church of the apostles because we hold its faith; one with the Church of the Reformers, alone because we hold its faith. Outward human forms are nothing; ecclesiastical government, so far as it is of man, is nothing; all things are nothing, if there be not this oneness of faith. With it begins, in its life continues, in its death ends, all true unity. There can be, there is, no true unity but in the faith. . . . The one token of this unity, that by which this internal thing is made visible, is one expression of faith, one 'form of sound words,' used in simple earnestness, and meaning the same to all who employ it. . . . You may agree to differ; but when men become earnest, difference in faith will lead first to fervent pleadings for the truth, and, if these be hopelessly unheeded, will lead to separation. All kinds of beliefs and unbeliefs may exist under the plea of toleration; but when the greatest

love is thus professed, there is the least. Love resulting from faith is God's best gift. Love that grows out of opposition or indifference to faith, God abhors. There can be no true love where there is not also true hatred, — no love to truth without abhorrence of error. . . . In Christ we can alone find unity. Only when we meet in this center of all true unity will we have peace. And we can be in Christ only in a faith which accepts His every word in His own divine meaning, and shrinks with honor from the thought that, in the prostituted name of peace and love, we shall put upon one level the pure and heavenly sense of His Word and the artful corruption of that sense by the tradition of Rome or the vanity of carnal reason" (Spaeth, 2, 162 f) With respect to the Missouri Synod Krauth wrote, April 7, 1876: "I have been saddened beyond expression by the bitterness displayed towards the Missourians. So far as they have helped us to see the great principles involved in this disputation [concerning the Four Points], they have been our benefactors, and although I know they have misunderstood some of us, that was perhaps inevitable. They are men of God, and their work has been of inestimable value." (2, 236.)

111. **Krauth on Predestination.** — In a letter dated February 13, 1880, Dr. Krauth said: "I have not read Dr. Walther's exposition of the doctrine of election, but I purpose, as soon as I can command leisure, to write something whose object shall be to show that the New Testament doctrine, confessed by our Church, in regard to election, as fully as the most extreme Calvinism, gives all the glory to God and ascribes to Him the total merit of our salvation, both as secured and applied, and yet clearly and properly makes man responsible for his own destruction. . . . Luther is constantly claimed by the Calvinists, and I have known intelligent Calvinists who are entirely satisfied with the Formula of Concord on the 'Five Points.' Yet, the claim and the satisfaction are both groundless. The truth in the Formula so strictly follows the line of Scripture thinking that it is hard to get a spear's point under the scales of its armor. My own conviction about Luther is, that he was never a Calvinist on the 'Five Points,' but Augustinian, with some aspects of coincidence and *many* of

divergence, even where he was nearest Calvinism" In an article found among his papers after his death, Krauth says: "Why do men in completely parallel relations to this election move in opposite directions? The one believes, the other disbelieves. Is the election of God in any sense the cause of the difference? The answer of the Calvinist is: Yes. The answer of the Lutheran is. No. The election of God is indeed the cause of the faith of the one, but it is neither positively nor negatively, neither by act nor by failure to act, the cause of the unbelief of the other. Hence it is not the cause of the difference. I choose (or elect) to offer bread to two beggars. The election of bread for his food and the election to offer it to him are the proper cause of the reception of the bread on the part of the one, but they are not the cause of the rejection on the part of the other. The first concurs in my election, but his concurrence is the effect, not the cause, of my election. The second refuses, but his refusal is not the effect of my election, but an effect in spite of it. As between me and the men the decision must be, that the acceptance of one is no more than the refusal of the other, the cause of my election. But between the one and the other the difference is made by the willingness to receive, wrought by me through the offer, and the unwillingness to receive, wrought by the man himself in spite of the offer. Faith is not the cause of our general election. That must be admitted by all. But neither can it be the cause of our particular election, for the particular is only possible, and indeed only thinkable, as the result of the general. But it is the cause of the difference between the man who receives the benefits of this election, and the man who refuses them. This faith is foreseen indeed, but it does not become by that the cause of the election — it is foreseen as an effect of the election and therefore cannot be considered as the cause; it is a finality in the work of God in the restoration of fellowship. It is, as a condition, part of the election, and cannot therefore be the cause of the whole." (2, 327 ff.) Evidently, then, Krauth was not ready to solve the mystery of election by assuming that, in the last analysis, a difference in their respective guilt is the final cause why some are saved while others are lost.

## OTHER REPRESENTATIVE THEOLOGIANS.

112. Dr. Wm. Julius Mann (1819—1892) was born at Stuttgart, Wuerttemberg; graduated at Tuebingen, 1841; active as teacher till 1844; came to America in 1845, influenced by his intimate friend Ph. Schaff at Mercersburg, who had left Germany in 1844; 1846 assistant pastor of a German Reformed congregation in Philadelphia; 1850 assistant to Dr. Demme, pastor of Zion Ev. Luth. Congregation, Philadelphia, to which H. M. Muhlenberg had been called in 1742; in 1851 he was received into the Ministerium of Pennsylvania; served as president of this body from 1860 to 1862 and 1880; from 1864 to 1892 he was professor in Philadelphia Seminary. From 1848 to 1859 Dr. Mann cooperated in editing the *Deutsche Kirchenzeitung*, established by Schaff as "an organ for the common interests of the American German [Reformed and Lutheran] churches." The *Kirchenzeitung*, of which Mann in 1854 became editor-in-chief, was a paper for theologians, not for laymen. It bore the motto: "In necessariis unitas, in dubiis libertas, in omnibus caritas." Its object was "to prepare the way for the Lord, and add a few stones to the dome of the Church of the future." It served the Lutheran and Reformed churches by antagonizing revivalism. From 1863 to 1866 Dr. Mann was editorially responsible for *Evangelische Zeugnisse*, a German homiletic monthly, also established by his friend Ph. Schaff. In 1856 Mann opposed the Definite Platform in his *Plea for the Augsburg Confession*, and 1857 in his *Lutheranism in America*. In 1864 he translated the *New Testament Commentary* of the American Tract Society into German for this society. In 1886 he edited *Hallesche Nachrichten* (Vol. I); 1887 he published the *Life and Times of H. M. Muhlenberg*; 1891 the same in German. Apart from quite a number of other books, Dr. Mann wrote articles for various German and English periodicals. "I always prepare myself closely," said Mann in a letter of February 14, 1866, "for the recitations in the seminary, write every week for the *Lutheran*, more for the *Lutherische Zeitschrift* of Brobst, continue the translation of the Tract Society's Commentary on the New Testament, keep up some correspondence, and at the same time perform my various and burdensome duties as a pastor and,

find yet a little, a very little, time for light reading." Mann, for many years a bosom friend of the arch-unionist Ph. Schaff, whom he admired as "the presiding genius of international theology," gradually became a conservative confessional Lutheran theologian, opposed also to the unionism as practised by the General Synod. On April 7, 1892, Schaff wrote to his friend: "What right had the sixteenth and seventeenth century to prescribe to future generations all theological thinking? We are as near to Christ and to the Bible as the framers of the confessions of faith." Dr. Mann answered: "In the air in which this letter breathes I cannot live. . . . What right had the framers of the American Constitution to lay down a basis for the administrative side of the life of this nation?" As to the General Synod, Dr. Mann's love for it gradually turned into aversion, because of its utterly un-Lutheran features. He charged the General Synod with living "in a concubinage with the Presbyterians and Methodists." In 1853 he wrote: "I have rejoiced over the union of our Pennsylvania Synod with the General Synod, and now I rejoice still more." (173.) Mann still failed to see that no one can truly love the Lutheran Church who despises, ignores, and denies her doctrines and usages. In 1855 he said of Missouri: "They have no patience with their weaker sister," meaning the General Synod. (176.) But in the immediately following years Mann himself began to attack the Definite Platform and its American Lutheranism. With respect to the doctrines controverted within the Lutheran Church of America, however, Dr. Mann never occupied a clear, firm, and determined Lutheran position. He revealed no interest in the discussions on the Four Points. Of the Missouri Synod Dr. Mann wrote in 1866: "These theological scratchbrushes (*Kratzbuersien*) of the West do an important work. They discipline thousands of Germans ecclesiastically, as otherwise only Catholic priests are able to do. Most of them lead a rough, self-denying life. They defy effeminate, sentimental, hazy ecclesiastical Americanism. There is a firm character here. They will not always remain as rugged as they are now. The coming generation will be English and milder in many respects. The Missourians are a power in the West, where the Germans generally are

becoming a power, the longer the more. They will obtain an ever stronger elementary influence. The German [?] blood will make its influence felt for a long time" (Spaeth, *W. J. Mann*)

113. Passavant, Schmucker, Seiss, etc. — Other names well known beyond the General Council are Drs. Passavant, B. M. Schmucker, Krotel, Seiss, Spaeth, Weidner, etc. *Dr. W. A. Passavant* (1821—1894) was born of Huguenot ancestry at Zelienople, Pa; graduated in Gettysburg Seminary; was pastor in Baltimore till 1844 and in Pittsburgh till 1855; published the *Missionary* in 1845, which in 1861 was merged with *The Lutheran*, Passavant remaining coeditor. He established *The Workman* in 1880, which he edited in a conservative, confessional spirit, while in the *Missionary* he had been a fiery advocate of New-measurism. Cooperating with Pastor Fliedner of Kaiserswerth, Passavant introduced the first deaconesses in America; founded hospitals, orphanages, and academies; presented, in 1868, the ground for the Theological Seminary at Chicago; organized the home missionary work of the Pittsburgh Synod (whose founder he was) and of the General Council. Passavant was preeminently a missionary and philanthropist — the "American Fliedner." *Dr. G. W. Sandt*, in *Lutheran Church Review* 1918: "Passavant was educated in a Presbyterian college, where revivals were a fixed part of the curriculum. He prepared for the ministry in a Lutheran seminary at a time when Lutherans were more 'anxious' about the 'bench' than they were about the faith. It is not to be wondered at that his early ministry reflected the fitful and unstable emotionalism of the 'Anxious Bench' religionism, which he later outgrew and disowned." (442.) — *Dr. Beale Melancthon Schmucker* (1827—1888), though a son of S. S. Schmucker, did not agree with the Definite Platform. He was secretary of the English Church Book Committee, a member of the German Kirchenbuch and Sonntagsschulbuch Committee, and of the Joint Committee on Common Service. He was regarded as the greatest liturgical scholar of the Lutheran Church in America and admired as a parliamentarian. He was a passionate lover of the Reformation and its literature. The *Church Book* of the General Council has been said to be "his lasting monument." Through it he laid the foundation also for the Com-

mon Service. "Next to Dr. C. P. Krauth," said the *Kirchenblatt* of the Iowa Synod (1918), "there is no man to whom the General Council owes so much as to Dr. B. M. Schmucker." B. M. Schmucker published articles on liturgical, hymnological, biographical, and other themes, and wrote the preface to the Common Service, first published by the United Synod of the South, 1888. — *Dr. G. F. Krotel* (1826—1907) studied theology under Dr. Demme; was renowned as pulpit orator; succeeded Krauth in the editorship of the *Lutheran*; repeatedly served the Pennsylvania Synod and the General Council as president. — *Dr. J. A. Seiss* was pastor in Philadelphia from 1858 till his death in 1904; he also served as president of the Pennsylvania Synod and the General Council. Seiss was one of the most prolific Lutheran authors in America. "There was a strength, a stateliness, a dignity, and an artistic finish to all his greatest pulpit efforts that compelled a hearing." (*Luth. Church Review* 1918, 90.) His style is oratorical rather than churchly. His *Lectures on the Gospels and Epistles* are the fruit of many years of careful sermonizing and study. In his lectures on the *Last Times*, 1856, and on the *The Apocalypse*, 1866, Seiss championed the cause of a chiliasm which the General Council refused to reject. — *Dr. Adolph Spaeth* (1839—1910) graduated at Tuebingen; active in Wuertemberg, Italy, France, and Scotland till he accepted a call as Dr. Mann's assistant in Philadelphia in 1864; served as professor at the Seminary from 1867 till his death; was president of the General Council from 1880 to 1888, and of the Pennsylvania Synod from 1892 to 1895. He wrote the biographies of W. J. Mann, 1895, and of C. P. Krauth, Vol I, 1898; Vol. II, 1909. — *Dr. R. F. Weidner* (1851—1915), president of the Seminary of the General Council at Chicago since its opening in 1891, reproduced in the English language a number of modern German theological works.

### CONSTITUTION.

114. Fundamental Articles of Faith. — At the preliminary meeting at Reading, 1866, "Fundamental Principles," embracing nine Articles of Faith and Church Polity and eleven Articles of Ecclesiastical Power and Church Government, were adopted as a necessary condition of the contemplated union.

The first Article of Faith states that, "to the true unity of the Church, it is sufficient that there be agreement touching the doctrine of the Gospel," etc. The second declares: "The true unity of a particular church, in virtue of which men are truly members of one and the same church, and by which any church abides in real identity, and is entitled to a continuation of her name, is unity in doctrine and faith and in the Sacraments, to wit, that she continues to teach and to set forth, and that her true members embrace from the heart, and use, the articles of faith and the Sacraments as they were held and administered when the Church came into distinctive being and received a distinctive name." The third article distinguishes general and particular symbols. The fourth emphasizes that these confessions are a testimony of unity and a bond of union only when "accepted in their own true, native, original, and only sense." Those who "subscribe them must not only agree to use the same words, but must use and understand those words in one and the same sense." According to the fifth article the unity of the Lutheran Church "depends upon her abiding in one and the same faith." Article six reads: "The Unaltered Augsburg Confession is by preeminence the Confession of that faith. The acceptance of its doctrines and the avowal of them without equivocation or mental reservation make, mark, and identify that Church, which alone, in the true, original, historical, and honest sense of the term, is the Evangelical Lutheran Church." According to the seventh article the only churches "entitled to the name Evangelical Lutheran are those which sincerely hold and truthfully confess the doctrines of the Unaltered Augsburg Confession." The next article reads: "We accept and acknowledge the doctrines of the Unaltered Augsburg Confession in its original sense as throughout in conformity with the pure truth of which God's Word is the only rule. We accept its statements of truth as in perfect accordance with the canonical Scriptures: We reject the errors it condemns, and believe that all which it commits to the liberty of the Church of right belongs to that liberty." The ninth article declares "that the other Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church, inasmuch as they set forth none other than its system of doctrine and articles of faith, are of necessity pure and Scriptural," and that all of them "are, with the Unaltered

Augsburg Confession, in the perfect harmony of one and the same Scriptural faith." (Ochsenford, *Documentary History*, 178 f.) According to the By-laws of the Constitution "the first two morning sessions after the opening of the convention shall be devoted to the discussion of doctrinal points and important practical questions."

**115. Articles on Church Polity.**—According to the second of the eleven articles of Ecclesiastical Power and Church Government, the church "has no power to bind the conscience, except as she truly teaches what her Lord teaches, and faithfully commands what He has charged her to command." The third reads: "The absolute directory of the will of Christ is the Word of God, the canonical Scriptures, interpreted in accordance with the 'mind of the Spirit,' by which Scriptures the Church is to be guided in every decision. She may set forth no article of faith which is not taught by the very letter of God's Word, or derived by just and necessary inference from it, and her liberty concerns those things only which are left free by the letter and spirit of God's Word." The fourth continues: "The primary bodies through which the power is normally exercised, which Christ commits derivatively and ministerially to His Church on earth, are the congregations. The congregation, in the normal state, is neither the pastor without the people, nor the people without the pastor." This paragraph permits of an interpretation that opens a loophole for Romanism. According to the sixth article "a free, Scriptural General Council, or Synod, chosen by the Church, is, within the metes and bounds fixed by the Church which chooses it, representatively that Church itself; and in this case is applicable the language of the Appendix to the Smalcald Articles: 'The judgments of synods are the judgments of the Church.'" This seems to imply that the judgments of synods are as such correct and binding. The tenth article reads: "In the formation of a General Body the synods may know, and deal with, each other only as synods. In such case the official record is to be accepted as evidence of the doctrinal position of each synod, and of the principles for which alone the other synods become responsible by connection with it." This paragraph, which was embodied also in the constitution of the

United Lutheran Church, opened the door to indifferentism inasmuch as it made the General Council responsible, not for the actual conditions within, but only for the official attitude and deliverances of its district synods.

**116. A Legislative Body.** — The seventh article of "Ecclesiastical Power and Church Government" reads: "The congregations representatively constituting the various district synods may elect delegates through these synods to represent themselves in a more general body, all decisions of which, when made in conformity with the solemn compact of the constitution, *bind* so far as the terms of mutual agreement make them binding on those congregations which consent, and continue to consent, to be represented in that General Body." According to the ninth article, "the obligation under which congregations consent to place themselves, to conform to the decisions of synods, does not rest on any assumption that synods are infallible, but on the supposition that the decisions have been so guarded by wise constitutional provisions as to create a higher moral probability of their being true and rightful than the decisions in conflict with them, which may be made by single congregations or individuals." In keeping herewith Article I, Section 4 of the General Council's constitution provides: "No liturgy or hymn-book should be used in public worship except by its [the General Council's] advice or consent, which consent shall be presumed in regard to all such books now used, until the General Council shall have formally acted upon them." That the General Council was not a mere advisory, but a legislative body, was brought out in the Lima Church Case in which the judge decided that, according to the constitution and the expert testimony of members of the General Council, Synod had jurisdiction over its pastors and congregations, and that hence he could not adjudge the property to that part of the congregation which had refused to submit to Synod. Dr. Seiss testified (April 6, 1876) that, according to the constitution of the General Council, congregations are obliged and bound to respect and obey all constitutional resolutions of Synod. In its issue of September 26, 1901, the *Lutheran* maintained that Christian liberty did not prohibit the Church from making prescriptions to individual congregations in the adiaphora;

that pastors and congregations, by joining the Pennsylvania Ministerium, yielded the right to decide and act for themselves, and agreed to submit to the regulations of Synod in the points enumerated; that it was not an infringement of the rights of a congregation to make this a condition of synodical membership. (*L. u. W.* 1901, 305.) In 1915 the Augustana Synod adopted a resolution recommending a change in the constitution of the General Council in order to make the body "both in principle and practise a deliberative and advisory body only."

**117. Conforming to Decisions a Moral Obligation.** — In 1866 Dr. Krauth, defending the polity of the General Council, wrote in the *Lutheran and Missionary*: "We entirely agree with our friend in the *Lutheraner* that the strength of the Church does not depend upon a '*strong government*,' but on the unity of faith, doctrine, and confession. But '*strong*' and '*weak*' are relative terms. We want a *real government*; something which shall hold in a genuine outward bond, however mild, the true confessors of our Church's faith, and enable them to work in harmony, and if we understand the principles which control the government of the Synod of Missouri, we are sure that we desire nothing stronger nor better in the government of our whole Church in this country than these principles would give us. We only ask a church government which shall bind us by the gentle laws of love and peace, which shall take offenses out of the way, which shall be an aid in causing all things to be done decently and in order in the Church — which shall be a safeguard to conscience, and shall not lay, nor attempt to lay, burdens on it. The decisions of a synod which shall be such a government representatively will indeed be merely human, as the decisions of all earthly governments are merely human — nay, often manifestly wrong; nevertheless, we hold that the generic governmental principles and the right of representation are as really of God in the Church as in the State. The obligation to conform to the decisions of such a [representative] synod is the obligation of peace, love, and order; and where violation of them (except on the ground of conscience) creates scandal and offense, there is a moral obligation to conform to them." (*Spaeth*, 2, 172 f.) However, the constitution of the General Council does not contain the limi-

tation: "where violation creates scandal and offense"; and Missouri holds that a congregation may ignore a resolution of synod, not only on the ground of conscience, but also whenever it finds a resolution unsuitable for her conditions.

### SUBTLE UNIONISM.

118. **Missouri's Attitude toward the General Council.** — Originally Dr. Walther and Dr. Sihler were optimistic with respect to the movements which resulted in the organization of the new general body. Walther wrote: "Scarcely any event within the bounds of the Lutheran Church of North America has ever afforded us greater joy than the withdrawal of the Synod of Pennsylvania from the unionistic so-called General Synod. This is a step which will undoubtedly lead to consequences of the utmost importance and of the most salutary character. The plan to give prominence and supremacy in this land, by means of the 'General Synod,' to a so-called American Lutheranism which ignores the distinctive doctrines of the Lutheran Church, and to compel the truly Lutheran synods to occupy a separatistic, isolated, and powerless position, is completely frustrated by this step." (Spaeth, 2, 162 ) But the hopes of Walther and his friends were doomed to disappointment, at least in part. In spite of its irreproachable confessional basis the General Council was imbued with a spirit of indifferentism and unionism, though of a finer grade and quality than that prevailing in the General Synod. In accordance with its principle that fraternal cooperation and union of necessity presupposes unity in doctrine and practise, Missouri, instead of participating in the hasty organization of the General Council, insisted on Free Conferences in order first to bring about real doctrinal agreement, the prerequisite of every God-pleasing external union. In Reading, 1866, however, this request was disregarded, union being the paramount, true and real unity a secondary consideration. Nor was there a change effected in this attitude by the subsequent correspondence between the General Council and the Missouri Synod. At Reading the delegates passed the resolution: "That the synods represented in this convention which prefer a Free Conference to an immediate organization be and hereby are in-

vited to send representatives to the next meeting, with the understanding that they have in it all the privileges of debate and a fraternal comparison of views." To this Missouri responded at its convention in Chicago, in May, 1867: "In view of the relations we sustain toward different members of the Church Council, in reference to doctrine and churchly practise, we must be apprehensive that the consideration and discussion of differences still existing in the convention of the Church Council might give rise to the reflection that we intended to interrupt the bringing about of a unity, and are therefore fearful lest our participation, instead of leading to an agreement, might be productive of greater alienation. Even at the risk of appearing capricious in the eyes of the Reverend Body, and less diligent in our efforts for churchly unity, we beg leave to declare it again as our conviction that Free Conferences, such as are separated from officially organized conventions of ecclesiastical bodies, on the basis of the symbols of our Church, as contained in the Book of Concord of 1580, are the only proper means for an exchange of such convictions as are still divergent, and which, by the grace of God, may lead to a unity on the basis of our beloved Confession" At Fort Wayne, in November, 1867, the General Council renewed the resolution "that we sincerely respect the honest preferences of our brethren [Missouri] in regard to the best means of uniting our Church, and that we are willing to set apart a time, during the future sessions of this body, when it will meet them simply as a Free Conference." And, no answer having been received, the Council, at Pittsburgh, 1868, instructed its secretaries to bring the Fort Wayne action again to the attention of the Missouri Synod. In the following year Missouri answered that it was not its desire to deal with the General Council as such and during the sessions of the same; that by such a side-dealing justice could not be done the matter; that they desired and regarded Free Conferences as the proper means to reach the end contemplated. (Ochsenford, *Doc. History*, 152 ff.) Thus, from the very beginning, Missouri, in the interest of real unity as a prerequisite of union, urged free conferences and doctrinal discussions, while the General Council offered discussions "in regard to the best means of uniting our Church," at the same time insisting on

a mode which involved a recognition of the unionistic procedure adopted in organizing the General Council. Considering the facts that some of the synods, uniting in 1866 and 1867 with the General Council, had several months before belonged to the General Synod; that ostensibly they had severed their connection on technical grounds; that all along they had been committed, more or less, not only to a false confessional basis, but also to Reformed doctrines and un-Lutheran practise, etc., the Missouri Synod, without sacrificing its anti-unionistic principles, could hardly have taken a different course of action than it did. Moreover, the subsequent history of the General Council, down to the Merger in 1918, has proved conclusively that Missouri's original evaluation of the General Council's confessionalism was certainly not very far from the mark. It was, then, the persistent refusal, on the part of the General Council, of free conferences, such as Missouri could have attended without an *a priori* violation of her convictions, that brought about and prolonged the deadlock obtaining between the two bodies. As late as 1904, at the time of the Inter-synodical Conferences, Dr. Jacobs declared that he would not meet Missouri in a free conference without a preceding joint service of prayer; and to this the *Lutheran* assented. (*L. u. W.* 1904, 224. 370.)

**119. The Primary Difference.** — In 1885 Dr Spaeth wrote: "In no other Lutheran body of the Old or New World has the question on the great principles of true church unity received such attention and been treated in such a thorough and comprehensive manner as within the General Council." There is certainly a good deal of truth in this assertion. For the General Council did make repeated efforts at grasping and applying the principles of true church unity. But it lacked consistency, and in formulating the rules and theories, their theologians were influenced by conditions inherited from the General Synod. They lacked the courage or ability of completely breaking with their unionistic past. This was essentially the charge of Missouri against the General Council — the correctness of which was vindicated also by the action taken by the representatives of the synods of Ohio and Iowa at the first convention of the General Council, 1867, at Fort

vited to send representatives to the next meeting, with the understanding that they have in it all the privileges of debate and a fraternal comparison of views" To this Missouri responded at its convention in Chicago, in May, 1867: "In view of the relations we sustain toward different members of the Church Council, in reference to doctrine and churchly practise, we must be apprehensive that the consideration and discussion of differences still existing in the convention of the Church Council might give rise to the reflection that we intended to interrupt the bringing about of a unity, and are therefore fearful lest our participation, instead of leading to an agreement, might be productive of greater alienation. Even at the risk of appearing capricious in the eyes of the Reverend Body, and less diligent in our efforts for churchly unity, we beg leave to declare it again as our conviction that Free Conferences, such as are separated from officially organized conventions of ecclesiastical bodies, on the basis of the symbols of our Church, as contained in the Book of Concord of 1580, are the only proper means for an exchange of such convictions as are still divergent, and which, by the grace of God, may lead to a unity on the basis of our beloved Confession." At Fort Wayne, in November, 1867, the General Council renewed the resolution "that we sincerely respect the honest preferences of our brethren [Missouri] in regard to the best means of uniting our Church, and that we are willing to set apart a time, during the future sessions of this body, when it will meet them simply as a Free Conference." And, no answer having been received, the Council, at Pittsburgh, 1868, instructed its secretaries to bring the Fort Wayne action again to the attention of the Missouri Synod. In the following year Missouri answered that it was not its desire to deal with the General Council as such and during the sessions of the same; that by such a side-dealing justice could not be done the matter, that they desired and regarded Free Conferences as the proper means to reach the end contemplated. (*Ochsenford, Doc. History*, 152 ff.) Thus, from the very beginning, Missouri, in the interest of real unity as a prerequisite of union, urged free conferences and doctrinal discussions, while the General Council offered discussions "in regard to the best means of uniting our Church," at the same time insisting on

a mode which involved a recognition of the unionistic procedure adopted in organizing the General Council. Considering the facts that some of the synods, uniting in 1866 and 1867 with the General Council, had several months before belonged to the General Synod; that ostensibly they had severed their connection on technical grounds; that all along they had been committed, more or less, not only to a false confessional basis, but also to Reformed doctrines and un-Lutheran practise, etc., the Missouri Synod, without sacrificing its anti-unionistic principles, could hardly have taken a different course of action than it did. Moreover, the subsequent history of the General Council, down to the Merger in 1918, has proved conclusively that Missouri's original evaluation of the General Council's confessionalism was certainly not very far from the mark. It was, then, the persistent refusal, on the part of the General Council, of free conferences, such as Missouri could have attended without an *a priori* violation of her convictions, that brought about and prolonged the deadlock obtaining between the two bodies. As late as 1904, at the time of the Inter-synodical Conferences, Dr. Jacobs declared that he would not meet Missouri in a free conference without a preceding joint service of prayer; and to this the *Lutheran* assented. (*L. u. W.* 1904, 224. 370.)

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Wayne While Walther and the Missouri Synod demanded a real, material unity, unity as to the actual content, that is to say, the individual doctrines of the Lutheran symbols, the General Council was satisfied with a mere correct formal acknowledgment of the Confessions. It was the difference between the form and substance of unity. In the *Lutheran* of August 22, 1907, Dr. Krotel declared with respect to the doctrinal attitude of the Council. It "firmly refuses to occupy the unionistic position of doctrinal vacillation and tolerance. Contrary to the theological temper of the age, it maintains that there are articles of faith so definite and fixed and clear as to demand unqualified endorsement and defense." (*Doc. Hist.*, 138.) But Dr. Krotel's assertions are not supported by the facts. Judged by the real conditions, the General Council has always been a unionistic body.

#### THE FOUR POINTS.

120. Altar- and Pulpit-Fellowship, Lodges and Chiliasm. — Immediately at its first convention at Fort Wayne, 1867, it became apparent that the General Council was unwilling to take an unequivocal and decided stand with respect to Lutheran doctrine and practise. At Fort Wayne the Joint Synod of Ohio, through its delegates (G. Cronenwett, F. A. Herzberger, G. Baughman), after stating that, despite the reception of the Doctrinal Basis, "un-Lutheran doctrine and practise" were still found in some of the synods connected with the Council, requested an answer to the following questions: "1. What relation will this venerable body in future sustain to Chiliasm? 2. Mixed communions? 3. The exchanging of pulpits with sectarians? 4. Secret or unchurchly societies?" "Especially," they declared, "would we earnestly desire a decided answer with regard to the last item, inasmuch as the Joint Synod, for years already, in view of certain relations in one of its district synods, has had difficulties in consequence of four pastors belonging to secret societies, and would not, therefore, again burden its conscience." The answer was: "That this Council is aware of nothing in its 'Fundamental Principles of Faith and Church Polity' and Constitution, nor in the relation it sustains in the four questions raised, which justifies a doubt whether its decision on them all, when they are brought

up in the manner prescribed in the Constitution, will be in harmony with Holy Scripture and the Confession of the Church. That so soon as official evidence shall be presented to this body, in the manner prescribed by the constitution, that un-Lutheran doctrines or practises are authorized by the action of any of its synods, or by their refusal to act, it will weigh that evidence, and, if it finds they exist, use all its constitutional power to convince the minds of men in regard to them, and as speedily as possible to remove them" (*Doc. Hist.*, 156.) In other words: Unite with us, and then we shall see what can be done, according to the "educational methods," with reference to the Four Points. A similar evasive answer was given to the following petition of the Iowa Synod: "In order to effect a union of the Church, and that we may all truly agree in the principles of practise as well as of faith, without conditions, the delegates [G. Grossman, S. and G. Fritschel] of the Synod of Iowa propose, in accordance with the instructions of their Synod, that the General Council shall expressly acknowledge what, according to the understanding of the delegates of said Synod, is virtually acknowledged in the 'Fundamental Principles of Faith and Church Polity' adopted by this body, *viz.*: 1. that according to the Confession of the Evangelical Lutheran Church there must be, and is, condemned all church-fellowship with such as are not Lutherans; for example, ministers serving congregations such as are mixed and not purely Lutheran, receiving such congregations and their pastors into synodical connection, the admittance of those of a different faith to the privilege of Communion, the permission of those not Lutheran to occupy our pulpits, etc.; 2. according to the Word of God, church-discipline be exercised, especially at the celebration of the Holy Communion, and be likewise exercised towards those who are members of secret societies." The answer was: "That the General Council is not prepared to endorse the declaration of the Synod of Iowa as a correct logical deduction and application of the negative part of our Confessional Books, and that we refer the matter to the District Synods, until such time as, by the blessings of God's Holy Spirit and the leadings of His Providence, we shall be enabled throughout the whole General Council and all its churches to see eye to eye in all the details of practise and usage, towards the consummation of which we will direct

our unceasing prayers." (161.) In other words. Unite with us, and we shall see what can be done in the future, and whether your position really is in harmony with the Lutheran Confessions. Hereupon the Iowa men declared that their Synod could not unite with the Council, because "in accordance with our deep and sincere conviction, which is at the same time that of the Synod we represent, we must declare it to be a necessary precedent condition of an official ecclesiastical connection between synodical bodies that there should be a complete and hearty agreement not only in the principles of faith and confession, but also in an ecclesiastical practise accordant with such faith and confession, as set forth especially in the first of the propositions presented by us." (162) Among the pastors who, at Fort Wayne, also declared their dissent with respect to the dubious attitude of the Council regarding the Four Points were the Revs. J. Bading, A. Hoenecke, A. Martin, C. F. Welden, and C. F. Heyer. (155 ff.)

121. Side-lights on "Four Points" Difficulties. — Dr. S. E. Ochsenford explains in *Documentary History of the General Council*: "The difficulty lay in the fact that some synods demanded that that should be done at once [?], regardless of consequences, which others felt could be done with much better results by following an educational method, leading in the process of time all the synods and congregations, among many of which in certain portions of the Church there existed peculiar difficulties, to the same lofty eminence of purity in doctrine and in practise, and so true unity in both. The older synods had difficulties in this respect, of which the more recently formed synods had no true conception. These difficulties could not be eradicated at once and by the fiat of any organization; but as they had grown up gradually, so they must be removed by a process of education." (164.) Dr. Spaeth gives the following explanation of the situation, and apology for the attitude of the General Council at Fort Wayne: "There appeared at this point a wide difference, especially between the Eastern and Western synods, which was in the first place the natural result of the historical development, through which those various sections of the Church had passed which now endeavored to form an organic union. The Lutheran Church

in the Eastern part of our country, having been founded about one hundred and fifty years ago, had passed through all the different stages of church-life, suffering, and death, by which the history of the Church and theology of the German Fatherland was characterized in that period. We need not be surprised to find that during this time many things crept in which were in conflict with the spirit and Confession of our Church. Over against those things the renewed appreciation of the Lutheran Confession and the honest return to the same was of comparatively recent date. It was therefore not to be expected that there should have been on all sides at the very outset a thorough insight into all the consequences and obligations of a decided and consistent adoption of the Lutheran Confession. On the other hand, most of the Lutheran synods of the West had been founded at a much more favorable season. Out of the very fulness and freshness of the revived Confession, partly even in the martyr-spirit of a persecuted Church, have their foundations been laid and their structures raised. Accordingly, their whole congregational life could much more easily and more consistently be organized on the principles established in the Confession, and many evils could be excluded which in other places had taken root and had been growing for nearly a century." (164.) However, both Spaeth and Ochsenford fail to see the real issue; for the grievance at Fort Wayne was not the inability to abolish immediately all abuses referred to in the Four Points, but rather the persistent refusal on the part of the General Council to take, as such, a definite and unequivocal Lutheran attitude with respect to these questions. Nor was the charge, at least on the part of Missouri, with respect to the "educational method," as advocated and applied from 1867 to 1918 by the Council, directed against this method as such, but against the mutilation of this method by practically eliminating its eventual natural termination, expulsion according to Matt 18, and against the apparent insincerity in the advocacy, and the lack of seriousness in the application of this method. Indeed, the real grievance was not that weak members of the General Council were lagging behind in Lutheran doctrine and practise, but that many of her prominent leaders and her periodicals occupied an un-Lutheran position and championed un-Lutheran doctrine and practise.

## AKRON-GALESBURG RULE.

122. Non-Lutherans Admitted Exceptionally. — Regarding the Four Points, especially the question of altar- and pulpit-fellowship, the General Council during its subsequent history never really rose above the Fort Wayne level. In 1868, at Pittsburgh, the Council declared "that no man shall be admitted to our pulpits, whether of the Lutheran name or any other, of whom there is just reason to doubt whether he will preach the pure truth of God's Word as taught in the Confessions of our Church." (208) As though a sectarian minister could preach in accordance with the Lutheran symbols; or offense and unionism were fully eliminated when the sectarian minister, preaching in a Lutheran pulpit, proclaims none of his errors! The same convention held: "Lutheran ministers may properly preach wherever there is an opening in the pulpit of other churches, unless the circumstances imply, or seem to imply, a fellowship with error or schism, or a restriction on the unreserved expression of the whole counsel of God." (209) But, apart from other considerations, the fact is that, as a rule, these conditions were not and could not be complied with. Furthermore, the same convention declared: "Heretics and fundamentally false teachers are to be excluded from the Lord's Table." (209.) But the convention at Chicago, in 1870, explained: "Although the General Council holds the distinctive doctrines of our Evangelical Lutheran Church as in such sense fundamental that those who err in them err in fundamental doctrines, nevertheless, in employing the terms '*fundamental errorists*,' in the declaration made at Pittsburgh, it understands not those who are the victims of involuntary mistake, but those who wilfully, wickedly, and persistently desert, in whole or in part, the Christian faith, especially as embodied in the Confessions of the Church Catholic, in the purest form in which it now exists on earth, to wit, the Evangelical Lutheran Church, and thus overturn or destroy the *foundation* in them confessed; and who hold, defend, and extend these errors in the face of the admonitions of the Church, and to the leading away of men from the path of life." (215 f.) Accordingly, the fact that a Christian held the Reformed view on the Lord's Supper did not *per se* exclude him from the altars of the General Council.

123. "The Rule Is." — At Akron, O., 1872, in answer to a question of the Iowa Synod referring to the declaration of 1870, Dr. Krauth, then President of the General Council, submitted the following: "1. The rule is: Lutheran pulpits are for Lutheran ministers only. Lutheran altars are for Lutheran communicants only. 2 The exceptions to the rule belong to the sphere of privilege, not of right. 3. The determination of the exceptions is to be made in consonance with these principles, by the conscientious judgment of pastors, as the cases arise." (216.) At Galesburg, 1875, the General Council declared: "The rule which accords with the Word of God and with the Confessions of our Church is: 'Lutheran pulpits for Lutheran ministers only — Lutheran altars for Lutheran communicants only.'" (217.) However, this declaration, which, for the time being, satisfied the Iowa Synod, admits of the interpretation: The exceptions are: Lutheran pulpits for non-Lutheran ministers, and Lutheran altars for non-Lutheran communicants, as was virtually admitted also by the General Council in her answer of 1877 to an appeal from the Ministerium of New York against violation of the Galesburg Rule. (217.) Returning — if indeed a return was required — to the Akron Declaration, the General Council, in 1889, stated "that at the time of the passage of the Galesburg Rule, by the General Council, the distinct statement was made that all preceding action of the General Council on pulpit- and altar-fellowship was unchanged. . . . Inasmuch as the General Council has never annulled, rescinded, or reconsidered the declarations made at Akron, O., in the year 1872, they still remain, in all their parts and provisions, the action and rule of the General Council. All subsequent action of the General Council is to be understood and interpreted according to the principles there determined and settled. . . . The present position of the General Council is to be understood and interpreted in such manner that neither the amendment and further explanation at Galesburg nor the original action at Akron be overlooked or ignored, both of which remain in full force and mutually interpret and supplement one another." (219.) Exceptionally, non-Lutherans may be admitted to Lutheran pulpits and altars — such, then, was the final official decision of the General Council as to the question of pulpit- and altar-

fellowship In the *Lutheran* of May 3, 1917, Rev. J. E. Whitteker, president of the General Council Home Mission Board, said that it was his custom not to refuse the Lord's Supper to non-Lutherans (*L. u. W.* 1917, 463.) Dr. J. Fry, *The Pastor's Guide*, says: "It is not considered proper to give a general invitation to persons belonging to other congregations to participate in the Communion at the time when it is administered. If any public invitation is given, it should be at the time when the Communion and preparatory services are announced, and such persons be requested to make personal application to the pastor, so he may know who they are, and judge of their fitness to join in the Communion. The door should not be opened wider to strangers than to children of the household." (54.) In 1904 Dr. Deindoerfer of the Iowa Synod declared: "We do not see that in the circles of the General Council, as a whole, the churchly practise has improved and become less offensive, and that earnest proceedings are instituted against members who are guilty of offensive practise—a state of affairs which our Synod never can and will sanction." (*L. u. W.* 1904, 516)

### INTERDENOMINATIONAL FELLOWSHIP.

124. **Sound Principles.**—The doctrinal basis of the General Council as well as a number also of its later declarations and resolutions as to church-fellowship and cooperation with non-Lutherans are sound. They breathe the Lutheran spirit revealed in the manly words of C. P. Krauth: "The Lutheran Church can never have real moral dignity, real self-respect, a real claim on the reverence and loyalty of her children while she allows the fear of denominations around her, or the desire of their approval, in any respect to shape her principles or control her actions. It is a fatal thing to ask, not, What is right? What is consistent? but, What will be thought of us? How will our neighbors of the different communions regard this or that course? Better to die than to prolong a miserable life by such a compromise of all that gives life its value." (*L. u. W.* 1917, 468.) In 1909 Dr. T. E. Schmauk, then president of the General Council, declared in regard to the World's Missionary Conference: "We regret our inability, on account of our sound

fundamental principle of unity as a prerequisite to cooperation, to enter in as one of the active elements in such a meeting." The committee reported: "We approve of the President's position as to the World Conference and the Federal Council." In 1913 the General Council resolved with respect to participation in "The World Conference on Faith and Order": "While regretting that it is unable to unite with the Communion of the Episcopal Church in arranging for, and conducting, a Conference on Faith and Order, yet, nevertheless, it hereby resolves to appoint a Committee on the Unity of Faith, which shall be authorized, without participating in organization or arrangement of any conference, to present and set forth the Lutheran faith touching particular doctrines, either independently, or when they are under discussion in any conference or gathering, without, however, granting the committee any power of association, arrangement, fellowship, or practical direction, but confining it to the one specific function of witness and testimony to the faith that is in us, and which we rejoice to confess, and to have tested, before all the world" In 1915 the General Council made the statement: "Regarding general movements in the Christian world which have arisen in the last few years looking to the drawing together of the whole Christian Church on earth, such as the movement of a free Protestantism toward a united foreign mission objective, the Federation of Churches, and other movements of a similar character, we recommend that, while we cannot at this time [sic!] organically participate, it is well, nevertheless, to keep fully informed as to their trend, direction, and development." (467.) In 1917 Schmauk said in the *Lutheran*: "The Lutheran faith has suffered terribly in the past by attempts of union and cooperation with various Christian denominations and tendencies. Usually they have penetrated insidiously into our spirit, and poisoned our own life-roots, and taken possession of our palaces. But these damages have been wrought through an attempted unity with men who are not at one with us in the profession of a *common faith*. As Luther said: 'They have a different spirit.'" (468.)

125. **Facts Discounting Declarations.** — Although the General Council as such has always confined its fraternal inter-

course and cooperation to Lutheran synods (General Synod, United Synod South, etc.), its members and official boards have not. In 1916 several representatives of the General Council attended the Latin-America Missionary Conference. Its Mission Board was connected with the "Foreign Mission Conference," a body composed of Adventists, Baptists, Quakers, Universalists, Reformed, etc (461.) In his pamphlet, *Dangerous Alliances*, 1917, Rev. W. Brenner, a member of the General Council, wrote: "The *Woman's Mission Worker*, the *Foreign Missionary*, and the *Home Missionary* [periodicals of the General Council] have published letters and articles defending Lutheran participation in 'union movements.' In the *Lutheran* of September 14, 1916, Rev. C. F. Fry lauds federation in 'mission-work' and 'Reformation celebrations.' 'On Tuesday evening pastors of non-Lutheran churches presented their greetings,' so the *Lutheran* of November 18, 1915, describes in part the 175th anniversary celebration of St John's Ev. Lutheran Church at Easton, Pa. Rev. E. S. Bromer, D. D., of the Reformed Church, addressed the congregation of the First Lutheran Church of Greensburg, Pa., on the occasion of its hundredth anniversary. (*Lutheran*, Nov. 18, 1915.) Emmanuel Lutheran Church of the Augustana Synod laid the corner-stone of a new church edifice, November 12, 1916, at Butte, Mont. 'Brief congratulatory speeches were made by Hon. C. H. Lane, mayor of Butte, and the Rev. J. H. Mitchell, chairman of Butte's Ministerial Association.' (*Lutheran*, Nov. 30, 1916.) We have also read of Anti-Saloon League representatives, and Women's Christian Temperance lecturers, male and female, who delivered speeches in the Lutheran churches." (463.) In 1915, when the General Council met in Rock Island, Dr. Gerberding occupied the pulpit of the Presbyterian church. At Port Colborne, Can., on November 11, 1918, Rev. Knauff of the General Council fellowshipped with Methodists, Baptists, Presbyterians, and Anglicans in a united Thanksgiving service. (*Luth. Witness* 1919, 14.) Dr J Fry in his *Pastor's Guide*: "A Lutheran pastor may officiate on any occasion, or perform a ministerial act in which ministers of other creeds take part, provided the occasion and circumstances are such as will not violate synodical order, nor compromise his confessional position." (84.) Again: "Y. M. C. A.'s, W. C. T. U.'s, Christian Endeavor, etc.,

are rarely [sic!] to be recommended to our people, as they are generally conducted on 'new-measure' lines, and their influence is to make our members dissatisfied with Lutheran or churchly ideas and usages." (97 ) It may be safely said that without the sanction of this species of unionism openly practised within the General Council, the Lutheran Merger of 1918 would have been an impossibility And yet, this practise admits of but one construction: mutual acknowledgment. "When teachers and preachers exchange pulpits and chairs, it is an emphatic way of declaring, not their personal friendship, but their endorsement of each other's teachings; it is all the same as to infer that they are in accord in their essential teachings." (Editor of the *Presbyterian* )

### ATTITUDE TOWARD LODGES.

126. Sound Lutheran Principles. — At its convention at Pittsburgh, 1868, the General Council made the following declarations with respect to secret societies: "1. Though mere secrecy in association be not in itself immoral, yet as it is so easily susceptible of abuse, and in its abuse may work, as it has often worked, great mischief in family, Church and State, we earnestly beseech all good men to ponder the question whether the benefits they believe to be connected with secret societies might not be equally reached in modes not liable to the same abuse. 2. Any and all societies for moral and religious ends which do not rest on the supreme authority of God's holy Word as contained in the Old and New Testaments; which do not recognize our Lord Jesus Christ as the true God and the only Mediator between God and man; which teach doctrines or have usages or forms of worship condemned in God's Word and in the Confessions of His Church; which assume to themselves what God has given to His Church and its ministers; which require undefined obligations to be assumed by oath, are unchristian, and we solemnly warn our members and ministers against all fellowship with, or connivance at, associations which have this character 3 All connection with infidel and immoral associations we consider as requiring the exercise of prompt and decisive discipline, and after faithful and patient monition and teaching from God's

Woid, the cutting off the persistent and obstinate offender from communion of the Church until he abandons them and shows a true repentance." (*Doc Hist*, 208 )

127. Practise out of Tune with Principles. — From the very beginning the official declarations of 1868 were and remained a dead letter. With the exception of the Augustana Synod, lodges were generally tolerated and, in part, practically encouraged within the General Council throughout its history — resolutions to the contrary notwithstanding. Lodge-men were received with open arms, and no questions were asked. In 1873 the English District Synod of Ohio, affiliated with the Council, deposed Rev. Bartholomew because, for one reason, he, in a sermon, had testified against the lodgism prevailing in Synod. (Report 1874, 45 47 ff.) The *Pilger*, a German paper published within the General Council, wrote in 1875: "Testimony against secret societies will bring little result so long as the Church [General Council] looks on in silence while pastors of the Christian Church are members of antichristian lodges. Indeed, many resolutions have been passed against pastors being members of secret orders; but paper is patient, and those who are rebuked laugh at Synod's resolutions." *Herold und Zeitschrift*, August 2, 1884, related of a pastor connected with the Council: "He is a Freemason. He does not refrain from showing his attitude toward the lodge. Recently, after delivering the funeral address for a Freemason, he put on his Masonic uniform before the congregation, and marched out to the grave. Some time ago he announced a lecture on Masonry in his church. Appearing before a large audience which had gathered, in the white leathern apron and other paraphernalia of his order, he, in eloquent fashion, set forth the advantages of Masonry, etc., making special mention of its great antiquity and marvelous liberality." In 1886, the *Lutheran* declared that excommunication because of membership in a secret society had never been an official demand of the General Council. The *Lutherisches Kirchenblatt*, edited by pastors connected with the Council, reported a meeting of the Pennsylvania Ministerium, held in January, 1887, as follows: "Pastor Hinterleiter made a motion that pastors ought not belong to secret societies. Pastor Struntz vehemently opposed this mo-

tion, declaring that it had no place in a constitution, but was part of a pastor's private life. Dr. Fry expressed it as his opinion that such a resolution would give offense." In the *Lutheran Church Review*, April, 1903, Carl Swensson wrote: "I believe the entire stand taken by, for instance, our Augustana Synod on the secret society question has been a mistake and a misfortune. Society members, inside or outside of the Church, should be treated just as any other people" (*L. u. W.* 1903, 184.) In the same year a number of General Council ministers publicly joined the Mystic Shriners. On May 6, 1917, the pastor of the First English Lutheran Church in Kitchener (Berlin), Ont., held a lodge-service for the Freemasons and Odd-Fellows. At the convention of the Ministerium of Pennsylvania in 1917 a petition signed by thirteen members was presented to amend the constitution by *striking out* § 51 in Art. 10, according to which "any minister belonging to the Ministerium who shall, after due admonition, persist in fellowship and cooperation with any such antichristian society or order [lodges], whether secret or not, shall be subject to discipline." (*Proceedings* 1917, 182.) No action was taken by Synod.

**128. Educational Method a Pretense.** — In dealing with offenders also against the Lutheran principles pertaining to lodge-membership, the General Council advocated the "educational method." But the fact is that during the whole course of its history no serious and persevering efforts whatever were made to enlighten the congregations as to the utter incompatibility of Lodgism and Lutheranism. Geo. Fritschel: "It cannot be denied that the General Council as such has done nothing to bring about a progress in this question" (concerning lodge-membership). The same, he says, was true of its chief synods. Partly they did not want any discussions on this question. The officers of the Pennsylvania Synod remained unconcerned even when ministers joined the lodges. (*Geschichte*, 2, 322.) The Iowa *Kirchenblatt*, November 24, 1917, declared that the policy of education as advocated by the Council had utterly and finally failed. (*Luth. Witness* 1918, 387.) In the same year Rev. W. Brenner wrote: "There is an official General Council declaration which solemnly warns its pastors and

people against all fellowship with, or connivance at, secret societies (*Doc. Hist.*, 208); but from the attitude of some General Council ministers and their practise no one would ever suspect that they had ever read, or were aware of the fact, that such a document existed. During their seminary days little was heard on the subject, and so they are surprised when they see how other pastors who studied in other seminaries take a firm stand and refuse absolutely to officiate at any funeral where lodge-chaplains are permitted to take any part in the service" (*L. u. W.* 1917, 462.) Dr. J. Fry, professor in the Seminary of the General Council at Mount Airy, advises in his *Pastor's Guide*: "Ministers should not refuse to officiate at the funerals of persons who were not members of the Church, or who died impenitent. . . . Neither should a minister refuse to officiate because some lodge or other society may be present and have its service at the grave . . . He should finish his service, and quietly step back." (64.) Again: "Pastors are sometimes asked to preach special sermons before lodges . . . If there should be any good reason for their coming as a body, the service should be at an hour which interferes with no other service." (75 )

### CHILIASM.

**129. Official Attitude.** — At the convention in Pittsburgh, in 1868, the following declaration regarding Chiliasm was adopted by the General Council: "2. The General Council has neither had, nor would consent to have, fellowship with any synod which tolerates the 'Jewish opinions' or 'chiliastic opinions' condemned in the Seventeenth Article of the Augsburg Confession. 3. The points on which our Confession has not been explicit, or on which its testimony is not at present interpreted in precisely the same way by persons equally intelligent and honest, and equally unreserved and worthy of belief in the profession of adherence to the Confessions, should continue to be the subject of calm, thorough, Scriptural, and prayerful investigation, until we shall see perfectly eye to eye both as regards the teaching of God's Word and the testimony of our Church." (*Doc. Hist.*, 207.) According to the General Council, then, while the gross and carnal millennialism of the Jews must be rejected, there is a chiliasm which should be

tolerated and continue to be the subject of further prayerful research Pastors Bading, Adelbert, and Klingmann of the Wisconsin Synod, however, immediately, protested that they "rejected every form of chiliasm as against the Scriptures and the Confessions."

**130. Kind of Chiliasm Tolerated.** — The chiliasm which had always been advocated by members of the General Synod, and which the General Council refused to reject, was of a kind with the one entertained by Dr. John Geo. Schmucker (1771—1854), the father of S. S. Schmucker, and by the Drs. Helmuth, Lochman, Daniel Kurtz († 1856), by Loehe and leaders of the Iowa Synod, and especially by Dr. J. A. Seiss of the Pennsylvania Synod. According to J. G. Schmucker, the Second Petition of the Lord's Prayer and, among others, also the following passages of the New Testament: Matt. 5, 35; 8, 11. 26. 29; Acts 3, 20. 21; Rom 8, 20 21; 11, 25. 26, treat of a coming millennium, in which Christ will reveal Himself in a visible pavilion, take possession also of the civil power, govern the world according to the principles of the New Testament, bring about a great temporal happiness, prolong the life of the saints, etc. These and similar views were endorsed and advocated also by the *Lutheran*, the organ of the conservatives within the General Synod. (*L. u. W.* 1861, 282.) In his *Last Times* and *Lectures on the Apocalypse*, Dr. Seiss taught: "There is a first resurrection at the beginning of the Millennium, and a second resurrection at the end of the Millennium. The one embraces the martyrs and saints, — who are 'blessed and holy,' 'who have fallen asleep through Jesus,' — the other is the resurrection of the remaining dead." Seiss also denied that the Papacy is the true Antichrist. In the *Lutheran Cyclopaedia*, published by Jacobs and Haas, Dr Seiss states: "That there have been teachings and beliefs put forth, and usually called chiliasm, which are heretical and subversive of the true Gospel, there can be no question. That Jesus and His apostles, as well as the great body of primitive Christians, held and taught what some call chiliasm, or millenarianism, can as readily be substantiated. And that there are various open questions touching these eschatological particulars on which the final word has not yet been spoken, and which may be con-

sidered chiliasm, must likewise be admitted." (87.) A chiliasm, then, which expects a time of universal prosperity and glory for the Church on this side of the resurrection, a time when the whole world will be converted to Christ, a time when peace and righteousness will be established from the rivers to the ends of the earth; a chiliasm which believes in a future twofold coming of Christ, a double resurrection, a conversion and restoration of Israel, a future personal Antichrist, embodying all antichristian elements, — such a chiliasm, according to Seiss, the *Lutheran Cyclopaedia*, and the General Council, conflicts neither with the Bible, nor the Confessions, nor Lutheran orthodoxy. (87 f.)

### OTHER ABBERRATIONS.

131. Reformed Tendencies. — In the *Lutheran and Missionary*, April 13, 1876, Dr. Seiss declared that it was an arrogance to make the doctrine that unbelievers as well as believers receive the true body and blood of Christ at the Lord's Table an article of faith. Nor was the Puritanic doctrine concerning the divine obligation of the Sunday, universally held in the General Synod, discarded by the synods and congregations constituting the General Council. The Reading *Kirchenblatt*, December 19, 1903, wrote: "On the second Sunday in Advent the Philadelphia Sabbath-Association celebrated its anniversary in the Evangelical Lutheran Church (Rev. C. L. Fry) in Philadelphia. Addresses were made by prominent Sabbath-workers. The leading speakers were the well-known John Wanamaker (Presbyterian) and the Methodist Rev. Dr. Mutchler. . . . Pastors of our own Synod foster un-Lutheran doctrine, and our superiors remain silent. Do they know of it? Certainly! All the dailies brought the news: first the invitations, then long reports. And what do our professors say to it? They keep silence . . . But why do so many of our pastors hold a false, Puritan doctrine of the Sabbath? Because they have learned no better. If the students in our institutions would learn Luther's true doctrine concerning Sunday and sanctifying the holy-day, they could not, after becoming pastors of Lutheran congregations, take part in the fanatical doings of the sects. But, as it is, they go hand in hand with the sects, invite them to their churches, and permit them

to present a false doctrine of the Sabbath to their Lutheran church-members " (*L. u. W.* 1904, 38; 1901, 85.) In his *Catechist* Dr. Gerberding teaches: "The law of one holy day of rest: its purpose is rest for the body and refreshment for the soul. All works of mercy and real necessity are allowed." In 1816 the District Synod of Ohio refused to discipline a pastor who did not believe that a child becomes a Christian, and is endowed with faith, in Baptism. (*Luth Witness* 1918, 341. 356.) Rev. Brenner: "How long ago has it been considered a good policy in the General Council for its Mission Boards to agitate 'working together with the denominations about us for the best interest of our fellow-men,' and to 'agree on a program to lift the world to a higher level' by 'petitioning, demanding, and insisting upon special legislation for abolishing the saloon,' and doing a thousand other things which is the business, not of the Church, but of the State. . . Individual synods have passed prohibition resolutions. Individual pastors have gone entirely too far in this matter. They are fanatical on the subject. Some have almost gone daft over the liquor problem." (*L. u. W.* 1917, 465.) The *Home Missionary*, December, 1916, declared that what the Lutheran Church teaches in reference to the separation of Church and State is "rot" and "fool" theology (464.)

**132. Qualified Confessional Subscription.**—It was an ultrasymbolism, not countenanced by the Lutheran Church, when the *Lutheran and Missionary* maintained in its issue of September 27, 1867, that it was false, dangerous, and inconsistent to declare it the duty of Lutherans to compare for themselves the confessions received from the fathers with the Scriptures, and if found erring, to correct them; that this unbridled and radical theory, resting on the false assumption that private investigation of the Scriptures is the foundation of our faith, could not be proved by the Scriptures, and, reduced to practice, would endanger all purity of doctrine, and finally destroy all ecclesiastical communion. (*L. u. W.* 1867, 371 ) In the *Lutheran*, March 5, 1908, however, Dr. H. E. Jacobs, defending the other extreme, wrote: "Some of the difficulties that men whom we esteem have urged against the acceptance of all our Confessions are due to a misunderstanding of what

is involved in a confessional subscription. They conceive of the Confessions as an external law that binds the conscience to a mechanical acceptance of all [doctrinal matter] that may be found in these documents. What is properly confessional in these documents is their answers to the questions that rendered the framing of a confessional statement necessary. . . . We must study our Confessions as an organism, and appreciate the relation of each part to the other parts and to the whole Confession. Where the heart of each confession and of each doctrine confessed lies, must be the object of our search. To tear passages from their connection, or to represent isolated passages and merely incidental statements as having confessional authority is as unfair to the Confessions as it is to the Holy Scriptures." (Jacobs denies that all of the astronomical, geological, historical, and similar statements of the Bible are true.) The *Lutheran World*, commenting on Dr. Jacobs's statements, remarked: "But do not Dr. Jacobs's declarations sound very much like a *quatenus* rather than a *quia* mode of confessional subscription? For a long time we have not seen a theological statement that reminds us so much of the 'substantially correct' mode of subscription formerly in vogue in the General Synod. It certainly does not sound as stalwart as the General Synod's resolution in 1895, when she declared 'the Unaltered Augsburg Confession as throughout in perfect consistence with that Word' — namely, the Word of God." (*L. u. W.* 1908, 233 ) In his *Book of Concord*, 1893, Dr. Jacobs declared that only the primary, not the secondary, arguments of the Confessions are involved in the subscription. "The primary," says Jacobs, 'are the dogmas set forth with the purpose of showing they are believed and taught by the Lutheran Church, the confutations of errors whereby it wished to declare that it contradicted them, and formulas of speech either expressly prescribed or proscribed.' The secondary are 'all those particulars introduced to confirm or illustrate the former,' " etc. (2, 13.)

### ROMANISM.

133. Jacobs and Haas on Ordination, etc. — With respect to the doctrine that the public office of the ministry originates in, and is transferred by, the local congregation, Dr. Jacobs declared: "Nothing can be clearer than the an-

tagonism of our great Lutheran divines to this position, nor anything be more convincing than their arguments against it." (Gerberding, *The Lutheran Pastor*, 73.) Luther's language on this question, Jacobs maintains, is "not guarded with the same care as that of the later dogmaticians." (74.) According to Jacobs the right to call a minister "belongs neither to the minister alone nor to the laity alone, but to both in due order." (*Summary of Christian Faith*, 427. 424.) Dr. J. A. W. Haas: "The transference theory has been developed in antithesis to Rome, and in it Lutherans have agreed with the Reformed" It "makes the ministry an organ growing out of the congregation, which ill befits the divine origin of the ministry." "In it the main accent is placed on the vocation, of which ordination is the attestation." (Gerberding, *l. c.*, 77) Ordination, Dr. Haas declares, is "the prerogative of the whole Church." It includes "the separation for the ministry with invocation of blessing and consecration under divine approval." For this reason "ordination is not repeated." (112.) "This realism of a divine gift [in ordination] was apparently not held by Luther. . . . He declares the right of all believers to the office, because of the spiritual priesthood, and sees the consecration (*Weihe*) in the call. 'Ordo est ministerium et vocatio ministrorum ecclesiae.'" (116.)

134. Gerberding and Fry on the Ministry. — In his *Lutheran Pastor* Dr. G. H. Gerberding, professor at the seminary of the General Council at Maywood (Chicago), declares: It is clear "that this transference theory is not held by our older theologians. Neither have we been able to find any ground for it in Holy Scripture. Where is there a single proof that the congregation, made up of believing priests, does on that account possess the right to exercise the ordinary functions of the ministry? Where is the proof that the ministry is created by the congregation? Where is it written that the minister is amenable to the congregation? If the congregation of laymen alone makes the minister, then it can also unmake, or depose, him from his office. The whole theory is unscriptural and unhistoric. Only the fanatical sects, which have a low view of the means of grace, can, with any consistency, hold such a view." (82.) Again: "This [the outward call]

does not come from the ministry alone Neither does it come from the laity alone. It must come from the Church. But the Church is neither the ministry without the people nor the people without the ministry. . . . Christ, then, exercises His power to call men into the ministry through the Church [ministers and laymen]. The Church may exist either in the congregation or in the representative Church [synod], made up of ministers and lay representatives of congregations. Either the congregation, as defined above, not without a pastor, or the representative body, made up also of pastors and people, has a right to extend the outward call " (86 ) "The transference theory is unscriptural and not consistent with the Lutheran doctrine of the means of grace." (110.) "It is unscriptural and un-Lutheran to hold that the meaning and use of ordination consists essentially in this that it publicly attests and satisfies the validity of the call." (110 ) Ordination "conveys the special grace needed for the special work of the ministry." (120.) In his *Pastor's Guide*, 1915, Dr. J. Fry, professor at the seminary of the General Council in Mount Airy, Philadelphia, teaches: The call to the ministry "must come from God, from the Church [synod] and from a particular place or congregation." (5.) "Of all these qualifications [required for the ministry] the Church [synod] must be the judge, and in her synodical organization and authority must extend the call to the ministry." (6.) "A pastor serving a parish of more than one congregation has no right to resign one congregation and retain the others without the consent of the president of the synod to which the parish belongs." (14.) "The call should also specify that either party desiring to withdraw from the agreement [between the pastor and congregation] must give three months' notice to that effect to the other party. This provision will do away with the very objectionable custom in some congregations of holding annual elections for a pastor." (9.) "The power to decide and impose penalties belongs to the pastor and church council." (92.) Dr. Fry regards "the pastor and church council as the highest authority in all congregational matters." (98 ) All of these tenets are corruptions of the Scriptural and evangelical doctrines as proclaimed again by Luther. Consistently developed, their terminus is Rome. However, in the atmosphere of American

liberty, where State and Church are separated and the will of the former is not foisted on the latter, Romanistic tendencies cannot thrive, nor did they ever to any extent succeed in practise in the Lutheran Church, a Church whose fundamental articles are the doctrines of justification by faith alone and absolute spiritual freedom from every human authority.

### SYNERGISM.

135. **Synergistic Teaching on Conversion.** — In his *Confessional Principle*, 1911, Dr. T. B. Schmauk rejects Melancthon's *aliqua causa discriminis in homine*, some kind of discriminating cause in man. Schmauk writes: "Several qualities and motives in Melancthon's nature, including his humanist outlook on free will, and his tendency to emphasize the necessity of good works, contributed to inspire him with erroneous views, when the evangelical doctrine began to be wrought out more expansively, and led him to find the cause for the actual variation in the working of God's grace in man, its object. This subtle synergistic spirit attacks the very foundation of Lutheranism, flows out into almost every doctrine, and weakens the Church at every point. And it was practically this weakness which the great multitude of Melancthon's scholars, who become the leaders of the generation of which we are speaking, absorbed, and which rendered it difficult to return, finally, and after years of struggle, to the solid ground once more recovered in the Formula of Concord" (611; *L. u. W.* 1912, 33.) Evidently, this is sound Lutheranism; and similar testimonies were occasionally heard within the General Council throughout its history. (*L. u. W.* 1904, 273: Rev. Rembe; 1917, 473: Rev. G. H. Schnur.) But it was the song of rare birds. The synergistic note was struck much more frequently and emphatically. For making his anti-synergistic utterances Schmauk was called to order by Dr. Gerherding. And in 1916 Schmauk himself opened the *Lutheran Church Review* to L. S. Keyser, the zealous exponent of synergism within the General Synod, who wrote: "Faith's experience always includes the fact that, while the ability of faith is divinely conferred, the exercise of that ability is never coerced, but belongs to the domain of liberty. . . . The same is true of all volitions: the ability to will is divinely implanted;

the act itself belongs to the sphere of freedom. The ability to repent is from God; the use of that ability belongs to man's liberty." "The Scriptures never command men to regenerate; they always put that category in the passive voice, 'Except any one be born again'; but the Bible again and again commands men to repent and believe, putting the verbs in the active voice, imperative mood. What inconsistent commands these would be if man possessed no freedom in the exercise of repentance and faith!" "God's fiat of the individual's election unto salvation must have been decided upon in foresight and foreknowledge of the whole content of faith, including both its divine enablement and its human element of freedom." (65.) Similar views on man's freedom and responsibility were expressed by Dr. Haas in *Trends of Thought*, 1915. In his book, *The Way of Life*, 1917, Dr. Gerberding explains: "After prevenient grace, however, begins to make itself felt, then the will begins to take part. It must now assume an attitude, and meet the question: Shall I yield to these holy influences or not? One or the other of the two courses must be pursued. There must be a yielding to the heavenly strivings or a resistance. To resist at this point requires a positive act of the will. This act man can put forth by his own strength. On the other hand, with the help of that grace already at work in his heart, he can refuse to put forth that act of his will, and thus remain non-resistant." According to Gerberding man "may be said, negatively, to help towards his conversion." (167 ff.; *L. u. W.* 1917, 214.) Prior to 1901 Rev. C. Blecher, by order of the pastoral conference of Connecticut, belonging to the Council, published a pamphlet which was recommended for the widest possible distribution by the *Lutherische Herald*. In it Blecher, in direct opposition to the Formula of Concord, Art. 11, § 60 ff., maintains: Two persons are never in equal guilt when the one resists the grace of God from inherited blindness and weakness, like Peter, while the other resists contumaciously and purposely, like Judas." (*L. u. W.* 1901, 65; 1902, 144.) In 1900 Dr. Seiss had maintained in the *Lutheran*: "Conversion is largely one's own act. God first makes it possible; but then the responsibility rests upon ourselves to determine whether or not we will comply with the truth brought to our understanding." (*L. u. W.* 1900, 243. 246.) Misstating his-

torical facts and revealing his own synergistic attitude, Dr. G. W. Sandt wrote editorially in the *Lutheran* of March 27, 1919, concerning Dr. Stellhorn's polemics against the Missouri Synod: "When the controversy with Missouri was at its height, he [Stellhorn] could do no other but cast his soul into it and stand for the defense of the universal call to grace and salvation as over against the special call as Calvin and others teach it. He resented the charge of synergism which came from his opponents, and renounced it as strongly as any Missourian could "

**136. Synergistic Predestination.** — Synergism in the doctrine of conversion naturally leads to synergistic teaching on predestination. Moreover, the doctrine of predestination is, as it were, the bacteriological test whether one's Lutheran blood is really and absolutely free from synergistic infection also in the doctrines of conversion and justification. However, also in these tests as to the doctrinal purity of the General Council the results, as a rule, were negative. In his *Summary of Christian Faith*, 1905, Dr. H. E. Jacobs gives the following presentation of the doctrine of predestination: "Since God has not predestinated all that He has foreknown ('for all that the perverse, wicked will of the devil and of men purposes and desires to do and will do, God sees and knows before,' *ib.*), but, in His inexplicable will, has allowed a certain measure of freedom and contingency in His creatures, and afforded them a degree of moral responsibility, knowing from all eternity what will be the result of their use of this trust, He also has determined how in every case their decision and activity will be treated." "When, therefore, God has willed that He will be determined in a certain decision by the free decision of a creature, that freedom of the creature will certainly be guaranteed in the result; but what in the exercise of this freedom the decision of the creature will be, as well as the determination of His will concerning it, He knows from all eternity, and makes His plans accordingly." "The fulfilment or non-fulfilment of the proviso or condition is contained in the foreknowledge which determined the free destination." (556 f.) According to Jacobs, then, Predestination depends on the divine foreknowledge of the use that man will make of the freedom with which God has entrusted him. Plainly synergistic doctrine!

## LIBERALISTIC TRENDS.

137. **Rejecting Verbal Inspiration.** — Even the doctrines of the verbal inspiration and the complete inerrancy of the Holy Scriptures have been assailed by prominent representatives of the General Council and the *Lutheran Church Review*. Dr. H. E. Jacobs, in his introduction to *Biblical Criticism* (1903) by Dr. J. A. W. Haas, states: "It is, therefore, the Word and not the words; the divine substance and not the particular human form in which that substance is clothed; the divine truth and not the human language, with all its limitations, which, in accommodation to human finiteness, the Holy Spirit employs, that is 'the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth.'" (18.) "Nevertheless, the subordination of the words of Holy Scripture to the Word in no way diminishes the need of the most reverent handling and the most careful judgment of the words themselves when considered in the place which they are intended to serve." (19.) "A text from Genesis and one from John, one from the Psalms, and another from Romans, cannot stand upon the same footing. . . . Many a precious passage in the Old Testament can no longer be used as the sincere expression of Christian faith in the light of the clearer revelation of the Gospel." (21.) "There are few theorists who would assign the same degree of inspiration to the statistics and rolls in Ezra or Chronicles as to those parts of the New Testament for whose reading the dying ask when all other earthly words have lost their interest. Even the distinction between the Petrine and the Pauline theology, which the Tuebingen school so greatly exaggerated, contains within it an element of truth, when the difference is found to be one of degree, but not one of kind." (21.) "The time has come when, in antagonism to such [radical] criticism, the Church must offer a restatement of its doctrine of the Holy Scriptures. The theories of our dogmaticians are not the confessional declarations of our Church. The Augsburg Confession contains no statement on this topic" (26.) "It is only the Formula of Concord that gives an official utterance. . . . But it formulates no definition either of revelation or inspiration. It simply presents to us in the Scriptures an inerrant and infallible judge concerning all religious truth. . . . Religious truth, it declares,

'is to be received only as revealed in God's Word,' and for this Word we turn to the Scriptures." (27.) "For the truths made known by such revelation we are referred to a record. But that such a certain and indubitable record should be made, another supernatural act is necessary, and this is inspiration. This includes everything that is necessary to render the record an infallible standard of all religious truth" (27) "If the verbal theory of inspiration mean that every word and letter are inspired, so that the writer was purely passive and performed a merely mechanical office, as 'the pen of the Holy Ghost,' this, we hold, is an assumption for which we have no warrant. . . . All we need to know is that in the Holy Scriptures we have a complete, clear, and unerring record of revealed truth, that is made the standard, for all time, of religious teaching" (28.) Evidently, then, Drs Jacobs and Haas do not believe that the Holy Scriptures everywhere are inspired and free from error.

138. Bible Fallible in Scientific Matters. — Dr. J. Stump, professor in the seminary of the General Council in Chicago, supporting Dr. Jacobs, maintained in the *Lutheran Church Review* of January, 1904: One cannot speak of a confessional Lutheran doctrine of inspiration. Quenstedt's doctrine of verbal inspiration is mechanical and in conflict with all that we know of the Holy Ghost's activity; it cannot be proven from the Scriptures, nor indeed is it necessary. Stump considers the Bible free from error in its religious teachings, but not in its astronomical, geological, physical, and similar statements. To quote literally: "The holy writers were not inspired, however, to be 'teachers of astronomy, or geology, or physics,' and no number of contradictions in this sphere would shake our confidence in the absolute authority of Holy Scripture as the infallible test of theological truth, and inerrant guide in all matters of faith and practise." "The dogmaticians were led to maintain it [the verbal inspiration] by the exigency of the times and the stress of their severe dialectics. [The interest of the dogmaticians was to present the clear doctrine of the Scriptures on inspiration.] And as a result of their doctrines, they were logically obliged to claim the absolute impossibility of any kind of error or inaccuracy whatsoever in

the Scriptures, even in unimportant externals; and furthermore to claim that the Scriptures are not only the sole and infallible guide in matters of religion, but also an infallible guide in matters of human science so far as they touched upon any part of science's domain, — claims which a careful examination of the Scriptures and the purpose for which they were written do not bear out." (*L. u. W.* 1904, 85.) It was in agreement with these views when the *Lutheran*, prior to 1904, maintained that the Bible must be explained according to the modern sciences

139. Other Symptoms of Liberalism. — As a rule, the inerrancy of the Holy Scriptures is denied in the interest of the theory of evolution, a doctrine absolutely incompatible with, and, consistently developed, destructive of, the very fundamentals of Lutheranism. The evolutionary doctrine, however, this antipode of Christian thought, which, wherever digested, has proved to be the beginning of the end of Christianity, was adopted also and publicly defended within the General Council. Rev. Brenner says: "I have heard General Council ministers say that they did not believe everything that is written in the Bible, and as they continued to explain their views, it became very evident that they were evolutionists." (*L. u. W.* 1917, 465.) Dr. T. E. Schmauk, the president of the General Council, declared in the *Lutheran*, April, 1912: "Evolution is the most wide-embracing, suggestive, and fascinating theory of things and life that ever has been offered. In innumerable cases it has been found to be in accord with nature and with history. In itself it is not a cause, but a process. Evolution as a partial process may be within Christianity." In 1915, in his book, *Trends of Thought*, Dr. J. A. W. Haas wrote: "If evolution as a biological theory remains within its limits and knows its sphere, it will not contradict the claims of Christianity. If we avoid a materialistic philosophy in biology, and if we do not make nature all-controlling, we can accept evolution as not in disagreement with Christianity." "But, on the other hand, Christianity must be careful not to demand as Biblical facts old hypotheses of species. It must differentiate between statement in popular religious language and the interpretation which tradition has put upon Biblical

statement In this tradition there are elements of past science which have unconsciously colored the Biblical account Christianity must also treat its document historically, and not be disturbed if the temporal vessels of its religious truths are not shaped scientifically. Were they thus shaped, they would fail in their very purpose. It is general, popular, descriptive, child-like language, which is universal and lasting. But Christianity must make certain great reservations over against any theory of evolution. It must demand that the doctrines of a personal God, of the final spiritual character of life and its origin, and of the divine nature of man's spirit be not violated." "Christianity can allow an evolution as the continuation of creation." (*L. u. W.* 1915, 514.) The *Lutheran*, June 21, 1917, published an article of L. S. Keyser in which he maintains "Evolution is God's method of developing that which He has previously created. The evolutionary process may have continued for millenniums upon millenniums until the introduction of life. Whether man's body was evolved or not, surely his soul must have been created. We should use two terms: creation and evolution. Together they afford an adequate explanation of the universe as it is to-day." (*Lutheran Witness* 1918, 372 ) According to *Lutherscher Herold*, October 15, 1904, Dr. Pick, of the General Council, declared: "Harnack is all right." (*L. u. W.* 1904, 517. 564.) "Keeping company with liberals, we are not surprised that some of our ministers are liberals in both doctrine and practise," says Brenner in *Dangerous Alliances*, 1917. "What is to be thought of the orthodoxy of a General Council minister who says: 'God spoke to the Christians of that day through their experience no less clearly than through the words of St. Paul'? *Lutheran*, March 29, 1917, p. 7. What about the soundness of the faith of a D. D. who can recommend *Hastings's Bible Dictionary* as a reliable work of reference? Rev. M. S. Waters recommends a book that is full of the worst heresies; but the president of the New York and New England Synod, Rev. W. M. Horn, when his attention is called to the matter, bluntly declares: 'I will do nothing in the case referred to.' On request of the District Synod of Ohio, the president of the General Council appoints a committee, with Dr. Joseph Stump of the Chicago Seminary as chairman. The committee investigates. It reports that "The General Council

at this stage has no jurisdiction in the case.' The charges were not denied. This question has not been settled, and so far as we know, no effort has been made since the General Council met in Rock Island, two years ago, to settle it. On the evidence submitted to him, Dr. T. E. Schmauk, president of the General Council, stated in his report: 'I am convinced that the man's views are unevangelical and thoroughly subversive of the principles on which the General Council is founded.' Gen. Council Minutes, 1915, p. 23" (*L. u. W.* 1917, 465)

### EQUIVOCAL ATTITUDE.

140. Maintaining a "Wise" Neutrality. — In the controversies of the Lutheran Church in America the General Council has persistently and on principle refused to take a definite stand. "The General Synod," says Dr. Singmaster, "has wisely refrained from making minute [''] theological distinctions, and has thus obviated much useless discussion. Apart from the special activities already alluded to, it has made few [quite a number of false] special doctrinal deliverances" (*Dist. Doctr.*, 60 f.) Doctrinal neutrality was the policy also of the United Synod in the South and of the General Council. The *Lutheran*, April 24, 1902, stated that, over against the General Synod, the fathers of the Council insisted on an unequivocal doctrinal and confessional basis, while, over against Missouri and other synods, they left room for divergence in the application of certain principles. "Kiss and make up," was the advice Carl Swensson, writing in the *Lutheran Church Review*, gave to the disrupted synods of the Lutheran Church in America (*L. u. W.* 1903, 146.) With respect to the doctrinal differences between Ohio and Missouri the *Lutheran Church Review* wrote in 1917: "There are less clear doctrines which despite the honest, sincere, and persistent efforts of men to state them in harmony with the divine Word admit of an honest difference of opinion." (450.) "There has been," says Dr. Jacobs, "no controversy within the General Council on the subject of election, and, therefore, no official declaration by the Council on the subject that has so largely occupied the attention of a number of synods." (*Dist. Doctr.*, 1914, 116.) That applies to practically all of the doctrines controverted

within the Lutheran Church of our country. In reference to them it has always been the policy of the General Council to maintain a wise neutrality. In *Lutherisches Kirchenblatt*, December 29, 1900, Rev Wischan of the General Council hit the nail on the head when he said: "As to our doctrinal position, we find ourselves in a peculiar situation. When questioned concerning our attitude toward those doctrines which have been discussed in the most spirited manner, and partly have become the occasion for ecclesiastical separations, we are embarrassed for want of an answer. We know exactly what the position of Missouri is in the doctrines of conversion and predestination. We know also what Ohio teaches in opposition to Missouri. But who can tell us what the General Council teaches on these points? Possibly, many among us agree entirely neither with Missouri nor with Ohio. Possibly some incline to the views of Ohio, while others prefer the Missourian doctrine. But at present there is no clarity in these matters in our midst, everybody apparently having the privilege of choosing his own position without fearing that the Church might call him to account. Very convenient indeed; but surely it is not the ideal. Or do those questions lie on the periphery to such an extent that an answer is a matter of absolute irrelevancy to a Lutheran Christian?" (*L. u. W.* 1901, 53)

**141. Not in Sympathy with Missouri.** — The unionistic and indifferentistic position of the General Council with respect to the differences in doctrine and practice prevailing within the Lutheran synods of the United States naturally led to a high degree of animosity and unfriendly charges against the Missouri Synod. Her attitude of certainty and conviction in the doctrines which she championed was branded and denounced as "intolerance," "bigotry," "narrow-mindedness," "exclusiveness," "aloofness," "pride," "Pharisaism," etc. In his *Problems and Possibilities* Dr. Gerberding wrote: "We have often said that this body of Lutherans, more than all others, has saved the Germans of the Middle West from being swamped in materialism and rationalism. Honor to whom honor is due. But the very prosperity of these Lutherans has made them haughty, self-sufficient, self-righteous. A tone of

Pharisaism and of infallibility seems to run through their utterances. They seem not only to believe in an infallible revelation from God, but in themselves as infallible interpreters of that revelation. Every one who does not accept their interpretation is branded as a heretic of the same kind and quality as those against whom the apostles warn, and whom believers are not to receive into their houses nor bid Godspeed. All who do not accept their interpretation in every jot and tittle are anathema in the apostolic sense. Their interpretations, glosses, and theses, and resolutions as to what the Confessions mean also seem to be infallible. Woe be to the Lutheran who dares even to question their conclusions!" (162.) Revealing the same animus, Dr. G. W. Sandt published in the *Lutheran* of December 12, 1918: "The new and powerful stream of immigration, which was headed by Dr Walther, and out of which has grown the Synodical Conference, with its more than 800,000 communicants and the largest theological seminary in the land, represents the reaction against the unionism of the State Church in Saxony. A man of deep piety, strong convictions, and sound theological learning, he became the apostle of a sturdy confessionalism, as orthodox as that of Hengstenberg, as vital and spiritual as that of Spener, and as fruitful in good works as that of Francke. He and his followers nursed that orthodoxy so faithfully and fenced it in so securely as to make Missourianism the synonym for the straitest sect of Lutheranism in the world. A doctrine of rigid aloofness and separatism was developed as a wall of defense, as binding upon a Missourian's conscience as almost any article in the Augsburg Confession could possibly be. It was inevitable that he and his followers should come into conflict with such leaders as Loehe and the Fritschels (founders of the Iowa Synod), with Loy and Stellanor and Allwardt in the Joint Synod of Ohio, and with Schmidt in the United Norwegian Church as it then existed. The controversies on the ministry, on predestination, on conversion and synergism, while expressive of deep conviction and loyalty to the Truth, do not form a chapter in our history of which Lutherans can feel proud. When orthodoxy becomes so strict and strait-laced and legalistic, when it stands up so erect as to lean backward, both the interests of the Truth and of the

Church are bound to suffer. The cause of unity is harmed, and union or cooperation is rendered impossible." However, if the paramount object of the Lutheran Church always was, is now, and ever must be, to maintain the truth and the unity in the Spirit, then, whatever in other respects may justly be said in praise of the General Council, her neutral attitude toward the doctrinal differences of the Lutheran synods in America, though temporarily it may have proved expedient in the interest of external union, was in reality neither Christian, nor Lutheran, nor conducive to the unity or any other real and abiding blessing of our beloved Church. For while indeed forbearance also with the weak in knowledge and faith is a mark peculiar to the Christian spirit, indifferentistic silence as to what is true or false, right or wrong, is neither a virtue, nor, in the long run, will ever prove to be of true advantage anywhere, least of all in the Lutheran Church

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## The United Synod in the South.

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### ORGANIZATION.

142. **Synods Participating in the Union.** — The United Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in the South was organized June 23, 1886, in Roanoke, Va., after a doctrinal basis had been agreed upon at a preliminary meeting in Salisbury, N. C., 1884. The following synods participated in the union: 1 The North Carolina Synod, organized in 1803, and since 1820 prominent in the General Synod. 2 The South Carolina Synod, organized in 1824, of which Dr J. Bachman, who opposed the confessionalism of the Tennessee Synod, was a member. Bachman (1790—1874) served the same congregation in Charleston for sixty years, and became renowned also as a scientist. E. J. Wolf: "Bachman was in the first rank of ornithologists in his day. With Audubon, whose two sons married his two daughters, he prepared *The Birds of America* and *The Quadrupeds of America*. He was a member of numerous scientific societies and numbered among his correspondents such men as Humboldt and Agassiz." (*Lutherans in America*, 475.) 3. The Virginia Synod, organized 1829, in which S. S. Schmucker, J. G. Morris, C. P. Krauth, J. A. Seiss, and B. M. Schmucker were active for a time. 4 The Southwest Virginia Synod, organized in 1841 and adhering to its loose doctrinal basis till 1881. 5 The Georgia Synod, organized in 1860, of which the *Lutheran Cyclopedia* remarked: "Half of the pastors are compelled to engage in secular pursuits for a support." At present the Georgia Synod is one of the most prosperous in the Southern group. There is no pastor of a regular parish of the Synod who is not supported by his parishioners. The members of the Georgia Synod are for the greater part descendants of the Salzburgers, who, in 1734, founded Ebenezer, twenty-five miles from Savannah. 6 The Mississippi Synod, organized in 1860. 7 The Tennessee Synod, founded 1820. 8. The Holston Synod, which branched off from the Tennessee Synod in 1860. — These synods are almost entirely English.

Very few of its congregations have regular German services beside the English. The synodical Publishing House and Theological Seminary are located in Columbia, S C. Other schools are: Newberry College in Newberry, S C., Roanoke College in Salem, Va.; Lenoir College in Hickory, N. C. The official paper of the United Synod, the *Lutheran Church Visitor*, has appeared for fourteen years with the motto, "God's Word, Our Rule; Christ, Our Pattern; A Pure Faith, Our Watchword." Dr. W H Greever, editor of the *Visitor* from 1904 to 1914, now edits the *American Lutheran Survey*. In addition to several benevolent institutions, the Southern Synods support a heathen mission in Japan since 1892. In 1886 the United Synod numbered 32,000 communicants, 14,000 belonging to the Tennessee and Holston Synods. The figures prior to the Merger in 1918 show 257 pastors, 484 congregations, 53,226 communicant, and 73,510 baptized members.

**143. Origin of General Body South.** — In 1863 the North Carolina, South Carolina, Virginia, and Southwest Virginia Synods withdrew from the General Synod because of the Civil War and offensive resolutions adopted by the General Synod with respect to Southern Lutherans and their attitude toward the war. In the same year the four synods, uniting with the Georgia Synod, organized the "General Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in the Confederate States of America." After the war (1866) this name was changed to "Evangelical Lutheran General Synod in North America," and subsequently to "General Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in the South." In the interest of union, the Tennessee Synod, which occupied a truly Lutheran position and stood for an unqualified adoption of the Lutheran symbols, sent a delegate to the General Synod South in 1867. Seventeen years later, 1884, at Salisbury, N. C., a doctrinal basis was adopted, which in 1886 resulted in the organization of the United Synod in the South, now merged into the United Lutheran Church in America.

#### DOCTRINAL BASIS.

**144. From Laxism to Confessionalism.** — The secession of the four Southern synods in 1863 was not caused by any doctrinal differences or dissatisfaction with, and opposition to, the un-Lutheran confessional basis and unionistic practise of

the General Synod. Nor was it of any immediate consequence as to the doctrinal and confessional attitude of the General Synod South, organized in the same year. Moreover, at its first convention in 1863, the General Synod in the Confederate States, the liberal-minded Bachman presiding, after animated discussions, declared in favor of a qualified subscription to the Augsburg Confession. Unanimously and solemnly the following doctrinal basis was adopted: 1. That the Holy Scriptures are the sole infallible rule of faith and practise; 2. that the Apostles' Creed, the Nicene Creed, and the Augustana "contain the fundamental doctrines of the Holy Scriptures"; 3. that, whereas different views concerning some doctrines of the Augustana have ever obtained and still obtain among the members, Synod permits "the full and free exercise of personal judgment with reference to these articles" (*Dist. Doctr.*, 1893, 171.) Doctrines in question were those of the Lord's Supper, absolution, baptismal regeneration, Sunday, etc., as set forth by Schmucker and Kurtz. However, already in the revised constitution, printed in the *Book of Worship*, 1864, the third, the most offensive point of this basis, was omitted. And soon after contact with the Tennessee Synod and the desire to draw her into the union of the general body, led to a movement in the confessional direction. In 1867 the General Synod South resolved to deny approval to publications supporting principles in conflict with the Augustana, and to refuse appointment of theological professors holding doctrines in conflict with this Confession. According to the *Book of Worship* of 1868 the candidates for ordination were required to take an oath of fidelity to the Word of God and the Lutheran Confessions based thereon. The Form of Confirmation contained a pledge of lifelong fidelity to the Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church. In 1872 Synod adopted an essay of Dr. Dorsch, in which he declares that the General Synod South unequivocally confesses the Augsburg Confession in its true, real, and original sense. According to the Constitution of the Theological Seminary (1873) the professors acknowledged, and subscribed to, "the Augsburg Confession, as in all its parts in harmony with the Rule of Faith and a correct exhibition of the doctrines of the Word of God." In 1880 the General Synod South informed the Tennessee and Holston Synods that she

adopts the secondary Lutheran symbols "as in accord with, and an unfolding of, the teaching of the Unaltered Augsburg Confession." In 1882 the General Synod declared itself ready to enter into organic union with other Lutheran bodies "on an unequivocal Lutheran basis." Several years later, as stated, the union was effected.

**145. Sound Lutheran Basis.** — The confessional basis agreed upon 1884 and adopted at the organization in 1886 embraces the following articles: "1. The Holy Scriptures, the inspired writings of the Old and New Testaments, the only standard of doctrine and church discipline 2. As a true and faithful exhibition of the doctrines of the Holy Scriptures in regard to matters of faith and practise, the three ancient symbols, the Apostolic, the Nicene, and the Athanasian Creeds, and the Unaltered Augsburg Confession of Faith Also the other Symbolical Books of the Ev. Lutheran Church, viz.: the Apology, the Smalcald Articles, the Smaller and Larger Catechisms of Luther, and the Formula of Concord, as true and Scriptural developments of the doctrines taught in the Augsburg Confession, and in the perfect harmony of one and the same faith." Substantially this was the basis of the Tennessee Synod; its adoption at Salisbury must be regarded as a triumph of the confessional fidelity of this body. "The strength of the Tennessee Synod," says Dr. E. T. Horn, "was given to the maintenance of orthodoxy; nor are we able to deny that their championship was needed and has been effectual." Among the other factors contributing to this result the testimony of Walther and the Missouri Synod must not be overlooked and underrated. Dr. A. C. Voigt, professor in the Seminary at Columbia, S. C., admits: "Lutherans in the South could not remain untouched by the influences that were at work in other parts of the country. The increasing appreciation of confessional Lutheranism which in the middle half of the nineteenth century passed over from Germany into and through this country also gradually permeated the South. It served to deepen the devotion of the Tennessee Synod to the historic Lutheran Confessions, and to awaken in the other synods a growing esteem and affection for the same Confessions." (*Dist. Doctr.*, 1914, 181.)

## INDIFFERENTISM.

**146. Actual Conditions.** — All sectarian churches formally acknowledge the Bible, yet they reject many of its doctrines. So a Lutheran synod may, in a formal and official way, accept the Lutheran symbols, and at the same time ignore or reject its material content. Witness the Lutheran state churches in Europe and the General Synod in America. In a measure, the actual conditions also within the congregations and district synods of the United Synod in the South have always been in conflict with their truly Lutheran basis. False doctrines, especially pertaining to the Puritanic observance of the Sabbath, were held and taught within the Synod. Without a word of criticism, for example, the *Lutheran Church Visitor*, July 13, 1911, published the following from the *Sunday-school Times*: "Don't use a public vehicle on Sunday unless you are prayerfully convinced that it would be sinning against God and man not to do so. Is not that a reasonable and safe principle? Is any other principle a safe one? A very limited amount of Sunday travel seems to be necessary. Probably more than ninety-nine one-hundredths of it is unnecessary and therefore wrong. To use a trolley car or train to go to church on Sunday may or may not be right; it is simply a question of God's expressed will for the individual at that particular time. To walk, or to attend another church would sometimes be the solution. To make a mere convenience of Sunday travel, under any circumstances, would seem to be a violation of the spirit of the day. But God will make each case clear to each surrendered seeker after the light of God's will, if the doing of God's will and the avoiding of sin by the widest possible margin are the only impelling motives."

**147. Ignoring Intersynodical Differences.** — With respect to the doctrines controverted within the Lutheran Church of America the United Synod has always maintained a neutral and indifferentistic attitude. Dr. Horn writes: "It can be said of the doctrinal basis of the Southern Synods that it is the sincere and intelligent confession of the churches. By this I do not mean that the Lutheran churches in the South have pondered all the controversies in which the symbols originated, and to which they gave the answer; nor that they have ac-

cepted all the inferences which sincere Lutherans now draw from the Confessions, and even may be justified in urging" (*Dist. Doctr.*, 1893, 183) Dr Voigt: "The United Synod has no distinctive doctrines apart from the distinctive doctrines of common confessional Lutheranism" (*Dist. Doctr.*, 1914, 179) In other words, the United Synod accepts only those doctrines in which all agree who claim to be confessional Lutherans. The *Lutheran Church Visitor*, March 15, 1917, wrote: "The United Synod has the fundamental doctrines, rests on them, and is satisfied with them. Not, perhaps, the doctrines fundamental to Missouri, but fundamental to Christian faith and life." Ridiculing the doctrines of conversion and election as taught by the Missouri Synod, the *Visitor* continues. "These doctrines are the simon-pure, unadulterated, unalloyed Lutheran doctrines! Missouriianism and Lutheranism are convertible terms!" — Regarding the fact that the United Synod has refused to take a definite stand with respect to the doctrinal differences within the Lutheran Church, the *Visitor*, March 15, 1917, remarked: "Still, husband and wife may live together in peace and happiness although they do not agree on every point. It may even be understood that some subjects are altogether taboo" This, evidently, is the spirit of indifferentism, inherited from the General Synod, with whom, in accordance with the law of spiritual affinity, the United Synod exchanged fraternal delegates, and is now organically united in the United Lutheran Church in America.

148. Old Spirit of Indifferentism. — To what extent the leaven of indifferentism was active also within the United Synod in the South appears from the following utterances of a layman in the *Lutheran Church Visitor*: "The spirit that developed this country, and that which has animated the clergy of the Lutheran Church, are antipodal. This unprogressive spirit, together with their aversion to innovations of all kinds, their refusal to deal with present-day problems, their mania for ramming doctrine wholesale down the throats of their communicants, their spirit of aloofness from ministers of other denominations, and their refusal to cooperate with them, has been the chief cause of this lack of progress in our Church. They have, in their strict and even painful adherence to dogma

and form, taken the spirit and life out of the Church and its worship. The enthusiasm and warmth of natural religion have given way to a religion of form and ceremony. They have taken the life and beauty out of the Bible, and made it a code of dry and inspired theology. Instead of preaching, they have almost invariably talked theology, and theology alone. Our Church has never been in need of would-be theologians, but we have been and are now sorely in need of pastors and preachers. They have discouraged honest investigation, if that investigation has the least taint of rationalism. In their supreme disgust for innovations they have made our Church as inflexible and unfit for the various conditions of modern life as the customs and practises of the Middle Ages would be out of place now. They have been completely oblivious of the fact that there are necessarily change and progress in theology and religion as well as in everything else. True, there are certain fundamentals that never grow old; equally true is it that there are some non-essentials that change with the varying hours. The non-essential has been made essential, and so strongly insisted upon that it is almost a sacrilege even to insinuate against its authority." The *Visitor*, March 15, 1917, referring to this publication, remarks: "Well, we admit the excerpt from the article is pretty raw. But the *Visitor* believes in allowing some freedom even to the religious press. . . . Unanimity ere long becomes monotony. *Varietas sine unitate diversitas. Unitas sine varietate mors.*"

#### UNLUTHERAN PRACTISE.

149. Lodge-, Pulpit-, and Altar-Fellowship. — Forbearance with all manner of weakness in doctrine and practise does not *per se* conflict with confessional Lutheranism. But a refusal on principle to take the correct position, also as to Lutheran practise, is indeed incompatible with true Lutheranism. The attitude of the United Synod, however, toward lodge-, pulpit-, altar-, and church-fellowship has always been of a kind which practically amounted to a denial of its confessional basis. Dr. Voigt confesses: "As a matter of fact and actual practise, Lutheran ministers in the United Synod do not invite others to occupy their pulpits indiscriminately;

and although in some churches the custom of extending a general invitation at Communion still continues from earlier times, the practise is diminishing, and in most churches it has passed away with the introduction of the Common Service. As to secret societies, there is not much agitation against them except in the Tennessee Synod, and a number of United Synod ministers are known to be members of such orders; but the sentiment of most ministers is unfavorable to them." (*Dist. Doctr.*, 1914, 188) "Discussions in regard to stricter or more lax practises have never led to divisions nor issued in official pronouncements of distinctive developments of confessional position" "Firm as they are in their convictions, Southern Lutherans are generally adverse to controversy. This is probably the true explanation of the conservative attitude of the United Synod towards the questions connected with pulpit- and altar-fellowship and secret societies. There are differences of view on these questions existing in the United Synod. But the disposition has always been not to fight the differences out, but to wait for time to bring about unanimity in regard to them. In the formation of the United Synod peculiar circumstances thrust these questions upon the notice of the body; but it declined to legislate in regard to them because it was unwilling to go through the throes of controversy which a decision upon them involved. Combined with this aversion to controversy, there exists an evangelical [?] impatience of legal constraint, which impels men to act upon principle rather than by rule." "It has already been stated that the Tennessee Synod is unique among the synods constituting the United Synod in having rules against pulpit- and altar-fellowship and secret societies; and the United Synod has pledged itself not to employ in its general work, in its theological seminary, in its mission operations, in the editing of its official organ, any person who would foster secretism or unionistic fellowship." (*Dist. Doctr.*, 1914, 147 f; 1893, 182.)

**150. Attitude toward Non-Lutheran Denominations.** — The United Synod as such did not establish an exchange of delegates with any of the non-Lutheran churches. However, invitations to preach in their pulpits on the occasion of synodical conventions were not refused. The *Lutheran Church*

*Visitor*, March 15, 1917: "Our United Synod ministers are not ashamed to speak of our Evangelical Lutheran testimony before Methodists, Baptists, Presbyterians, *et al*, *et id genus omne*" But the fact is that at such occasions the distinctive features of Lutheranism are, as a rule, passed over in silence; that full fellowship of prayer and service is indulged in; and that the spirit of indifferentism as well as the desire, on the part of the Lutheran synods and congregations, for returning the comity and kindness received at the hands of Methodists, etc., is encouraged and strengthened. As such, furthermore, the United Synod did not take an active part in interdenominational organizations, but, on the other hand, did not consider it a denial of the truth when its pastors openly and heartily participated in local ministerial unions, or when its congregations occasionally joined in union religious meetings. Thus Drs. Horn and Drach took part in the Interdenominational Conference at Edinburgh in 1910. The *Lutheran Church Visitor* encouraged participation in interdenominational meetings; e. g., in its issue of April 6, 1916, the Men's National Missionary Congress in Washington, D. C. "So it has done, does, and shall continue to do, and not be ashamed," declared the *Visitor*, March 15, 1917, and explained in defense of this attitude toward non-Lutheran bodies: "The United Synod believes that the lump [non-Lutheran churches] cannot receive 'absent treatment,' and that the Lutheran leaven cannot be placed in the lump from a prohibitive distance." However, according to the history of the Lutheran Church in America, in practically all of the interdenominational movements and meetings participated in by Lutherans, the rule has been not to confess, but, directly or indirectly, to deny the distinctive truths of Lutheranism. Speaking of the United Synod, Dr. Voigt remarked: "Rigid exclusiveness is quite foreign to its spirit."

#### TENNESSEE AND HOLSTON SYNODS.

151. *Tennessee Lowering Her Standard.* — The Tennessee Synod, whose early history is dealt with extensively in *American Lutheranism, Part I*, was the main factor in bringing about the change in the confessional attitude of the Southern synods. The *Lutheran Church Visitor*, March 8, 1917: "The Tennessee Synod helped the other synods to rise

and regain their Lutheran feet. Since then she has helped them to keep their feet and to win stronger foothold." "The ministers of the Tennessee Synod," says Dr. Horn, "trained as they have been for the most part in the homes and companionship of older ministers, have not a wide and varied culture, but possess a profound acquaintance with the writings of Luther and a ready and genial knowledge of the Holy Scriptures." (*Dist. Doctr.*, 1893, 178 ) In the revised constitution of 1866 the original confessional statement of the Tennessee Synod, adopting the Augsburg Confession without limitation or qualification, was enlarged to include also the Apology, the Smalcald Articles, the Smaller and Larger Catechisms of Luther, and the Formula of Concord "as true Scriptural developments of the doctrines taught in the Augsburg Confession." In the same year the Tennessee Synod, following the example of her daughter, the Holston Synod, eliminated from her constitution the objectionable features respecting incorporation, theological seminaries, synodical treasuries, etc. Among the Southern synods the Tennessee Synod alone adopted rules against pulpit- and altar-fellowship and against holding membership in secret societies. Her endeavors to induce the United Synod to take a similar position failed. Indeed, the original constitution, submitted in 1884 at Salisbury, contained a paragraph against pulpit- and altar-fellowship, membership in lodges, and chiliasm. And when this paragraph was rejected, Polycarp Henkel, representing the Tennessee Synod, refused to vote for the constitution. In 1886 the Tennessee Synod adopted the Salisbury basis, but added a declaration which condemned chiliasm, lodge-services, pulpit- and altar-fellowship, and all church union and cooperation conflicting with pure Lutheran doctrine, and recommended that the United Synod embody in its by-laws a paragraph pledging theological professors to teach nothing contrary to these principles or the doctrines of the Lutheran Church. At the meeting of the United Synod in Savannah, 1887, Soerates Henkel proposed a corresponding by-law, which, however, was tabled till the next meeting. The Tennessee Synod reaffirmed its resolution with the threat that they would not cooperate with the United Synod until a by-law embodying the four points had been

adopted. However, when the North Carolina Synod, with equal determination, took the opposite stand, Tennessee yielded, compromising on, and contending herself with, the resolution adopted in 1900 in which the United Synod assured the Tennessee Synod that, in their common work, they would earnestly endeavor to avoid everything that might tend to burden the consciences of brethren in any synod, and that all synods were equally bound to direct their practise and fulfil their duties according to their honest and conscientious conviction of the true and real sense of God's Word and the Confessions. Thus the Tennessee Synod, untrue to her noble traditions, finally did waive her demand for a correct Lutheran position on the part of the United Synod with reference to the four points. Tennessee closed her eyes to the fact that she remained responsible not only for what was done conjointly with the other synods in the United Synod, but also for the practise of these synods as such. Unionism, once again, had gained the victory. And now, after decades of fraternal intercourse with the General Synod, the Tennessee Synod is organically united with the synods in opposition to which she organized in 1820.

152. *Holston Synod.* — The Ev. Luth. Holston Synod was organized January 2, 1861, by 11 ministers and 16 congregations (with a communicant membership of 1,000) residing in East Tennessee and neighboring counties of Virginia, after having received their honorable dismissal for this purpose from the Tennessee Synod, which by this action was left without a single congregation or minister in the State whose name she bears. The step was taken not because of any dissatisfaction with the doctrinal position of the Tennessee Synod, but on account of the inconvenience and expensiveness of attending her conventions. However, the peculiar attitude of the Tennessee Synod toward theological seminaries, incorporation, synodical treasuries, etc., contributed to the separation. (*Holston Minutes*, 1861 ff.) In his Quartocentennial Address, 1886, Dr. A. J. Brown, for more than twenty-five years president of the Holston Synod, stated: "There was at the time of her formation, and had been for some time prior to this, considerable dissatisfaction with the constitution of the Tennessee Synod, and strong efforts were being made to have it amended.

It was contended by the advocates of reform that that instrument contained features and prohibitions which cramped and crippled the energies of the Church in the prosecution of her sublime mission, and that it no longer reflected the views of the whole Synod." The Holston Synod, then, did not model her polity after that of the mother synod. (*Minutes*, 1886.) But, while this was undoubtedly a progress in the right direction, the strict Lutheranism of the Holston Synod did not prove to be as pronounced and consistent as that of the Tennessee Synod had been. In 1886 the Holston Synod numbered 15 pastors and 27 congregations, with a communicant membership of 2,000, compared with 1,800 communicant members at present. The minutes of the Holston Synod record numerous reports and resolutions with respect to Mosheim Institute, which, however, proved to be a failure

**153. Sound Doctrinal Position.** — As a preliminary basis the Holston Synod, in 1861, adopted the Augsburg Confession and Luther's Smaller Catechism, at the same time declaring that "we do not intend to repudiate the rest of the Symbolical Books so called, and unlutheranize those who adopt them in connection with the Symbols which we have adopted, because we are satisfied that they, rightly understood and explained, contain nothing contrary to our doctrinal basis, and that we will, therefore, not refuse to fellowship those who adopt the collective body of the Symbolical Books as their Confessional Basis." (*Minutes*, 1861, 6.) Owing to the unsettled state of affairs in consequence of the Civil War, the constitution was not ratified till 1865. Its second article, "Of the Confessional Basis," reads as follows: "1. We acknowledge the canonical books of the Old and New Testaments as the only infallible rule of faith and practise. 2. We acknowledge the Augsburg Confession of Faith and Luther's Smaller Catechism as a correct statement of the doctrines of the Christian system of which they treat, and no minister connected with this Synod shall hold or preach, nor shall any church connected with this Synod, or any private member of any Church so connected, hold or propagate, any doctrine which may be repugnant to these universally acknowledged symbols of the Evangelical Lutheran

Church" (*Minutes*, 1865, 11.) In its revised constitution of 1895 the Holston Synod adopted all the Lutheran symbols.

154. **Entering Various Unions.**—In 1867 the Holston Synod resolved to unite with the General Synod South. In the following year A. J. Brown reported that he had been present at the last session of the General Synod, and that he was highly pleased with the action of that Synod, and felt assured that "it would be instrumental in bringing about much good in our Lutheran Zion" (*Minutes*, 1868, 4) In 1872, however, a resolution was adopted to withdraw from the General Synod because "there is much that is un-Lutheran in doctrine and practise in individual members" of that Synod (7) Two years later a union was effected with the General Council. (*Minutes*, 1874, 13.) In 1880 the delegate to the General Council "presented in glowing words the intellect, the breadth of view, the depth and elegance of culture, the sincere love and burning zeal for the soul and God's holy truth, of those composing that body." (10) In 1885 the Holston Synod endorsed the action of the Diet held at Salisbury (1884), and declared its readiness to join the remainder of the Southern Lutheran synods, on that basis, to form a General Union. (11) In his Presidential Report, 1886, A. J. Brown stated with respect to the Salisbury agreement: "I will barely add that the union was effected without any compromise of principle or proper feeling of self-respect on either side, and on a basis strictly Lutheran, and with a unanimity unprecedented in the history of similar movements" (7.) In 1890 the delegate to the United Synod reported: "While united in doctrine, it is to be regretted that we are not so fully united in practise, as was made apparent by the action of the United Synod on the 'By-laws, Rules of Order, and Regulations,' and particularly in regard to work. This section, which is the bone of contention, embraces substantially the celebrated 'Four Points.' And even here the difference is not so much in principle as in the practical application of principles. There are extremes on both sides. An attempt to embody the 'Four Points' in our basis of union would have defeated the organic union of our Southern Church in one general body; the adoption of the regulation in question would now disrupt it. We advise moderation. The

union of our Church in the South is of too much importance to be broken up, or even hazarded by the adoption of any measures not clearly required by our doctrinal standards, or of doubtful expediency." (15) Thus also with the Holston Synod union had become the primary, unity a secondary consideration.

### COMMON SERVICE.

155. **A Chief Bond of Union.** — The relations of the United Synod with the General Council and the General Synod were of a most cordial nature, manifesting themselves in the exchange of fraternal delegates (established by Southern General Synod in 1878) and in various cooperations, especially in the preparation and use of the Common Service. Concerning the exchange of delegates the sentiment was voiced again and again: "It was the joy of the members of the United Synod to have present the brethren of those bodies, to dwell together in goodly fellowship for a little season. Every heart was glad to feel that we were one in the faith and usage of the Evangelical Lutheran Church." Also with respect to the United Synod the Merger in 1918 came as a ripe fruit of the cordial relations which had been cultivated for decades. One of the chief bonds of union during this period was the Common Service, for which the United Synod justly claimed to be entitled to special credit. The first impulse for such a unity in service came from H. M. Muhlenberg. In a letter of November 5, 1783, four years before his death, he expressed the desire "that it would be a most delightful and advantageous thing if all the Evangelical Lutheran congregations in North America were united with one another by using the same order of service." Among others who later entertained the same wish was Charles Philip Krauth. In a letter to his son, April 2, 1857, he said: "Whilst I am anxious for such an agreement in regard to a doctrinal basis as will embrace all the wings of Lutheranism in our country, I very much wish we could agree on forms of worship in accordance with the liturgical character of our Church, and erect a barrier against the Fanaticism and Methodism which so powerfully control some of our ministers and people." (Spaeth, *C. P. Krauth*, 1, 380.) The *English Liturgy* (1860), the *Church Book* (1868), and the *Kirchenbuch* (1877)

of the Pennsylvania Synod and the *Book of Worship* of the General Synod, South, may be regarded as preliminary steps toward the realization of this wish.

**156. Cooperation of General Bodies.** — In a letter to the convention of the General Synod South, at Winchester, Va., 1870, Dr. Bachman of Charleston, four years before his death, expressed it as the strongest desire of his heart that all English-speaking Lutherans should have a common service. Pursuant to, and in accordance with, this request the General Synod South in 1874 elected a committee to prepare "The Common Service for the Use of Evangelical Lutheran Congregations" In 1876 Synod proposed negotiations on this matter with the General Synod and the General Council. The General Council, in 1879, resolved to cooperate, "provided the rule which shall decide all questions in its [Common Service] preparation shall be. The common consent of the pure Lutheran liturgies of the sixteenth century, and, when there is not an entire agreement among them, the consent of the largest number of those of greatest weight." In 1883 the General Synod declared her readiness to cooperate in accordance with the rule proposed by the General Council. The work was completed by a Joint Committee appointed by the three general bodies, B. M. Schmucker serving as chairman. In 1888 the *Common Service* appeared in two editions, one published at Columbia, S. C., by the United Synod South, the other at Philadelphia by the General Synod. In his preface to the Southern edition B. M. Schmucker said: "The Common Service here presented is intended to reproduce in English the consensus of those pure Lutheran Liturgies. It is therefore no new Service, such as the personal tastes of those who have prepared it would have selected and arranged; but it is the old Lutheran Service, prepared by men whom God raised up to reform the Service, as well as the life and doctrine of the Church, and whom He plentifully endowed with the gifts of the Holy Ghost. . . . This Common Service is in its newest parts as old as the time of the Reformation," etc. The work of the committee was approved by the three cooperating general bodies. The General Synod ratified it in 1885 and adopted the Manuscript in 1887. The efforts made at the conventions in 1889, 1891, and 1893 to rescind this action

failed The Common Service was adopted also by the Iowa Synod, the Joint Synod of Ohio, and the English District of the Missouri Synod But, while every Lutheran will rejoice at this success, it must not be overlooked that liturgical similarity dare never take the place of doctrinal unity. In 1873, in a public letter, the secretary of the East Pennsylvania Synod declared that similarity of ceremonies in the whole synod was of greater import than unity in confession (*L. u. W.* 1873, 153 ) Perhaps, this was exceptional. However, it does not appear that the bodies cooperating in preparing the Common Service developed a corresponding energy and determination in bringing about a true Lutheran unity in doctrine and practise Yet, unity in doctrine is of divine obligation and of the very essence of the Lutheran Church, while similarity in ceremonies, desirable and advantageous as it may be, is, and always must remain, a matter of expediency and Christian liberty.

#### THE END OF VOLUME II





















